

COLLECTOR'S
EDITION

Holiday

bake FROM SCRATCH®

COOKIES

81 **All-New
Recipes** from
Superstar
Bakers

**Make-Ahead
Tips and
Pantry Stash
Staples** You
Need to Get
Holiday-Ready

How to Host
the **Ultimate
Cookie Swap!**

Festive Bars
and Cookies
to **Make This
Season Even
Sweeter**

BAKE FROM SCRATCH SPECIAL ISSUE

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FROM SCRATCH®







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bake

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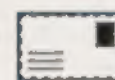
New
Book!

THE cookie COLLECTION

Introducing the ultimate ode to cookies. With more than 100 all-time favorites from the pages of *Bake from Scratch* magazine and 20 never-before-seen recipes you'll go crazy for, this is the cookie book every home baker should have in their collection. From buttercream-filled sandwich cookies and berry-studded sugar cookies for summer to gingerbread and shortbread primed for the winter holidays, these recipes will see you through every season. With both classics and contemporary crowd-pleasers, this is the collection you'll turn to time and time again. No matter the occasion, we've got you covered with cookies.

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EXPERTLY TESTED
RECIPES FEATURING
PREMIUM
INGREDIENTS



All recipes in each issue pass through the hands of the *Bake from Scratch* test kitchen. Each is flavorful and distinctive and developed with your unique tastes in mind.

The below products are partners of *Bake from Scratch* magazine and used exclusively in all of our recipes.



THERE'S NEVER A BETTER TIME TO BAKE COOKIES THAN THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

At *Bake from Scratch*, we get an early start on holiday baking by celebrating Christmas in July. We spend our summer months dreaming of eggnog and peppermint and testing holiday cookies. This July, I got inspired to invent an epic holiday hybrid: creamy cookie bars that combine cheesecake and one of my favorite wintry treats, gingerbread. I couldn't wait until the holidays to share my creation, so I gave these bars their television debut on Hallmark Channel's *Home & Family* for their Christmas in July celebration, which aired July 26. I always love being on the Hallmark Channel, and I hope you make it a part of your holiday celebration as well—Hallmark does Christmas unlike any other. On the show, I baked these bars with one of my good friends and the show's brilliant cohost, Debbie Matenopoulos. Baking her family's classic Greek Baklava (page 9) is one of her favorite ways to ring in the holidays., and I'm so thrilled she shared her recipe with us in this ode to cookie season.



Bottom photo courtesy of *Home & Family*/Hallmark Channel

That's what I love about our *Holiday Cookies* issue. Each year, we get to share innovative recipes and old family favorites from our global baking community. From Michele Song's Eggnog Thumbprint Cookies on page 58 to Marcella DiLonardo's Peppermint Bark Cookies on page 70, you'll find all the classic holiday flavors you crave. You know I love crème fraîche, too, so Laura Kasavan's sprinkle-laden Crème Fraîche Sandwich Cookies on page 42 are an obsession for me. And don't miss the cookie swap-worthy iced Mitten Cookies (page 95) by Tessa Huff, the bona fide queen of frosted desserts.

Our collaboration with these talented bakers is part of what the holidays are all about: coming together to share sweet traditions. When you bake these recipes, you'll be baking up holiday spirit.

Happy baking,

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

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and follow us for daily baking inspiration.



Bake from Scratch



The Crumb



@thebakefeed



GINGERBREAD COOKIE CHEESECAKE BARS

Makes 12 bars

I'm a fan of an ambitious holiday crossover, and these Gingerbread Cookie Cheesecake Bars are just that. An indulgent layer of cheesecake filling is sandwiched between chewy, delicately spiced gingerbread dough. It's a simple formula, but when that molasses-rich gingerbread meets that vanilla-scented cheesecake, you'll get flavor fireworks.

- 1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- ½ cup (170 grams) unsulphured molasses**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)**
- 4 cups (500 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger**
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**

- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves**
- 3 tablespoons (33 grams) minced candied ginger**

Cheesecake Layer (recipe follows)

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add molasses, beating until no streaks remain. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.
- 3.** In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, ground ginger, salt, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Beat in candied ginger.
- 4.** Spread 3¾ cups (about 1,000 grams) dough in prepared pan. Top with Cheesecake Layer.

Crumble remaining dough (about 2 cups [563 grams]) on top.

- 5.** Bake 45 to 55 minutes until edges are set, center jiggles just slightly, and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 175°F (79°C) to 180°F (82°C), covering with foil after 35 minutes to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely in pan. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. Trim edges and cut into 12 bars.

CHEESECAKE LAYER

Makes 3⅓ cups

- 16 ounces (455 grams) cream cheese, softened**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (8 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)**
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth. Add sugar and flour, and beat until combined, stopping to scrape sides of bowl as needed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Use immediately.

BAKLAVA

Yields approximately 39 pieces

Recipe by Debbie Matenopoulos. Excerpted from *It's All Greek to Me* © 2014.

Here is my family's secret recipe for the best baklava ever. Rolling it this way, as opposed to baking it in a flat pan, ensures a light flakiness and just the right amount of the honey syrup running throughout. Around the holiday season, when I was growing up, my mom would make big batches of this so that my sister, my brother, and I could give platters of it to our teachers. Needless to say, every new school year, teachers were very excited to see one of the Matenopoulos kids on their class rosters!

For the baklava:

- 1½ pounds (567 grams) walnuts (about 4 cups), finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 (1-pound) package (454 grams) phyllo dough sheets (13x18 inches)*, thawed (18 sheets)
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, melted

For the syrup:

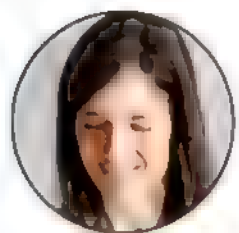
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 cups (480 grams) water
- 1 cup (336 grams) honey
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) freshly squeezed lemon juice (from about 1 lemon)
- 1 (2-inch-wide) piece (8 grams) fresh lemon peel

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C).
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the walnuts, sugar, and cinnamon, and set aside.
3. Working quickly, and keeping the unused phyllo sheets covered, lay out 1 sheet of phyllo on a clean flat surface. Lightly brush the phyllo sheet with the melted butter. Cover with a second phyllo sheet, and butter. Sprinkle about ½ cup of the nut mixture over the top sheet. Repeat this process with 2 more sheets of phyllo and another ½ cup of the nut mixture, then again with last 2 phyllo sheets and a final ½ cup of the nut mixture. You will have used 6 sheets of phyllo and 1½ cups of the nut mixture (3 layers). Starting at the long end (the 18-inch side), gently roll the layered phyllo sheets up into a tight, fat roll. Brush the seam with butter to seal. Repeat the entire process twice more. One package will make 3 rolls.
4. Using a large, very sharp knife, cut the rolls into 1-inch pieces. Lay the pieces cut side down on 2 large ungreased rimmed baking sheets. Bake for 20 minutes, remove from oven, and, using a large spatula or tongs, quickly flip the baklava over. Return to the oven, and bake 20 minutes more, or until cooked through, golden and flaky.
5. While the baklava is baking, make the syrup. Combine all of the syrup ingredients except the lemon juice in a medium, nonreactive saucepan. Set it over medium-high heat, bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. After 12 minutes, stir in the lemon juice, and cook 3 more minutes. Remove from heat, and carefully remove and discard the lemon peel. Let the syrup cool slightly.
6. Remove the baklava from the oven, and slowly pour the warm syrup over pieces on the baking sheets. Let stand 1 hour to soak up the syrup.
7. Transfer to individual cupcake wrappers, if desired, and serve. The baklava will keep, covered loosely, at room temperature for up to 1 week.

*We used Fillo Factory, available at Whole Foods.



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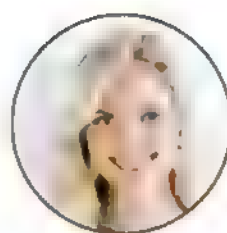
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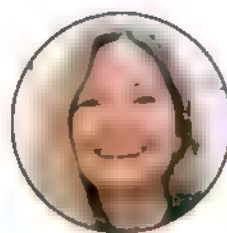
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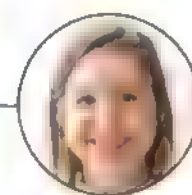
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FROM THE BAKE FROM SCRATCH TEST KITCHEN

Recipe Developer Laura Crandal and Food Stylist Elizabeth Stringer

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OUR TOP 10

WITH THESE TRUSTY TOOLS IN YOUR ROTATION, YOU'LL FIND COOKIE PERFECTION COMES EASY

1. STURDY SILICONE SPATULA OR WOODEN SPOON.

Once you add flour, keep the mixing to a minimum. After adding flour, every extra second spent beating your dough activates more gluten, which means tougher cookies. The key to not overmixing your cookie dough? Use a silicone spatula or wooden spoon to stir in your mix-ins (like chocolate chips, nuts, or sprinkles) by hand so you don't overwork the dough.

2. SIFTER.

Use a sifter to lightly dust flour onto your surface before rolling out dough. Sifting the flour instead of throwing it onto the surface ensures that you don't add too much. Excess flour on the surface will stick to your dough and lead to tough, dry cookies. In addition, you can use your sifter to dust your bars and cookies with a snowy layer of confectioners' sugar—instant elegance!

3. SPRING-LOADED SCOOP.

This handy tool allows you to scoop and drop consistently sized dough balls with ease and precision. Uniform cookies bake evenly—it's as simple as that.

4. FRENCH ROLLING PIN.

Tender doughs require a lighter touch than bread dough. Opt for a slim, wooden French pin. They're easier to maneuver than marble pins, and they apply delicate pressure to your cookie dough. Remember to rub it down with flour before using on particularly buttery dough in order to keep it from sticking during roll out.

5. RULER.

This math class essential can help you measure the thickness of cookie dough when you're rolling it out so you always have evenly sized cookies. It'll also help you properly divide up your dough when rolling out, slicing, or splitting it up into triangles (like the way you would cut rugelach dough).

6. METAL COOKIE CUTTERS.

Whether round, square, scalloped, or snowflake-shaped, a good cookie cutter should be made of a sturdy material like metal so it punches cleanly through your dough without catching or getting dented with the constant force of pressing

7. LIGHT-COLORED BAKING SHEETS.

You'll want to invest in light-colored baking sheets to ensure even cooking. (We like Williams Sonoma Goldtouch Nonstick Cookie Sheets.) And why multiple sets? For one, you need to let your baking sheet cool completely before placing a new batch of cookies on it. Placing cookies on a hot baking sheet can cause them to spread more as they bake because the heat melts the butter faster than the cookies bake. Having numerous baking sheets waiting in the wings means you don't have to constantly wait for one to cool down. Plus, if your cookies are browning too much on the bottom, you can double up on the baking sheets, stacking a second one under the first to create a protective barrier.

ESSENTIAL *Cookie Tools*

8. PARCHMENT PAPER. Using parchment paper as your baking sheet liner offers two cookie-baking benefits: you won't burn the bottom of your cookies, and you're cutting your cleanup time in half. Note: stay away from wax paper. While excellent for candy-making and storing in the freezer because it's moisture-resistant, wax paper is not heat-resistant and could melt into your cookies or even catch fire in the oven.

9. OVEN THERMOMETER. If you haven't recently calibrated your oven or have noticed that bake times are significantly off for your home-baked recipes, it might be time to invest in an oven thermometer and hang it on the middle rack. No matter what your oven tells you, the oven thermometer will give you a true reading of how hot the oven is. This way, you'll always know whether your oven has been properly preheated or needs to have the temperature dropped or lowered for precision.

10. COOLING RACKS. Wire cooling racks allow air to circulate on all sides of the cookies once they're out of the oven so they achieve a tender texture all around. When cookies are cooled on a plate, condensation gets trapped under the bottoms, making them soggy. Stick with cooling racks with a tight grid pattern for proper support; ones with open slats will cause soft cookies to dip in the middle while cooling. 🍪



Freeze

LOOKING TO HAVE COOKIES ON DEMAND? YOU'RE ONLY ONE SHORT THAW AWAY WITH OUR COOL GUIDE TO FREEZING DOUGH, BAKED COOKIES AND BARS, AND STAPLE COOKIE-BAKING INGREDIENTS

HOW TO FREEZE COOKIE DOUGH

Drop/Shaped Cookies:

Space cookie dough balls or shaped cookie dough out on a baking sheet. Freeze until set, about 15 minutes. Seal frozen cookie dough balls or shaped cookie dough in an airtight container or resealable bag. Dough will keep in the freezer for up to 3 months. When ready to bake, space frozen cookie dough out on a baking sheet, and bake as directed, adding 2 to 3 minutes to the bake time.

Slice-and-Bake Cookies:

Roll dough into tight logs with a diameter equaling the size of cookie you want. Wrap dough logs in plastic wrap and then in foil. Dough will keep in the freezer for up to 3 months. When ready to bake, let thaw slightly, until sliceable. Slice and bake as directed.

HOW TO FREEZE BAKED COOKIES

After baking, let cool completely. Do not freeze filled or frosted sandwich cookies. Wrap each cookie individually in plastic wrap, and store in a resealable bag. Cookies can keep in the freezer for up to 3 months. Let thaw, wrapped, at room temperature, about 1 hour; unwrap and serve.

HOW TO FREEZE BAKED BARS

After baking, let cool completely, but do not slice into individual pieces. For bars baked in a 13x9-inch pan, slice the batch in half before wrapping so each half fits nicely in a gallon resealable plastic bag. Double-wrap in plastic wrap, and store in a resealable bag. Baked bars can keep in the freezer for up to 3 months. Let thaw, wrapped, at room temperature, for a few hours; unwrap and slice.



WITH EASE

HOW TO FREEZE STAPLE COOKIE INGREDIENTS

Grated Fresh Ginger: Freeze freshly grated ginger in an ice cube tray. Once solid, you can pop the cubes into a resealable bag and have them on hand for up to 3 months.

Nuts: Fatty nuts have a notoriously short shelf life. Extend that time by toasting, cooling, and placing your nuts in a resealable bag. They'll keep for up to 2 months. Untoasted nuts can keep for up to 6 months.

Almond Meal: Like its whole counterpart, almond meal can go rancid quickly. Store your almond meal in a resealable bag in the freezer for up to 3 months.

Cranberries: Many holiday cookie recipes call for cranberries, and if you can't get ahold of the fresh stuff, frozen will always work in a pinch. Just be sure to thaw and pat dry before using in your recipe. Frozen cranberries will keep for up to 12 months.

Citrus Zest: Juicing some lemons or oranges but have no immediate use for the zest? Zest the citrus, and allow to have a quick freeze on a flat surface covered with parchment paper. Once frozen, place in a resealable bag, and freeze for up to 6 months. ▢



THE *Decoration* DEEP DIVE

YOUR COOKIES ARE DELICIOUS. NOW LET'S MAKE THEM DAZZLE.



Confectioners' Sugar Dusting

PICK A STENCIL, SIFT YOUR SUGAR, AND VOILÀ!
A DELICATELY DETAILED DESIGN IS BORN.

THE PATTERNS

Plain Dusting: When in doubt, no pattern or stencil is required. A simple dusting of confectioners' sugar onto a cookie is always embraced as a snowy wonder.

Doily/Lace Pattern: Use the edge of a paper doily or a lace tablecloth to give your cookies an intricate design. The fine confectioners' sugar will sift directly into the eyelet holes to resemble a lace pattern.

Paper Stencil Pattern: Trace stars, snowflakes, and trees onto paper and then cut them out, or use a stencil puncher (like the kinds found at craft stores like Michaels) to create quick, exact designs.

THE METHOD

Lay the desired pattern over the cookie. With a sifter, cascade confectioners' sugar onto cookie until completely coated. Gently remove the stencil or pattern, ensuring you don't knock any excess sugar onto cookie.



The Sugar Roll

ROLL YOUR SLICE-AND-BAKE AND DROP COOKIES IN THE FOLLOWING SUGARS TO GIVE THEM SOME HOLIDAY FLARE

THE SUGARS

Sparkling Sugar: For drop cookies that sparkle—literally—roll them in sparkling sugar. This glistening coating works best on mild, buttery recipes, like sugar cookies, or along the edges of slice-and-bake cookies.

Turbinado and Demerara Sugars: Offering plenty of shine and crunch like sparkling sugar, turbinado sugar and demerara sugar are large, raw sugar crystals that will give a slight caramel tinge and flavor to your cookies. We recommend using them with your more strongly flavored dough, like spiced or chocolate cookies.

Flavored Sugars: Imparting a hint of extra flavor, try coating your cookies in a scented sugar, like Heilala Vanilla Sugar or a homemade citrus sugar flavored with orange zest.

THE METHOD

Drop Cookies: Place about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) desired sugar into a small bowl. Roll your cookie dough into balls, and roll balls in sugar to coat. Add more sugar to bowl if necessary.

Slice-and-Bake Cookies: Place parchment paper on a cutting board, and sprinkle about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) desired sugar onto parchment. After shaping cookie dough into a log, roll dough log on sugar-covered parchment, firmly pressing so sugar adheres to surface. Add more sugar to surface if necessary.



Royal Icing 101

ROYAL ICING IS THE REIGNING CHOICE FOR DECORATING YOUR HOLIDAY COOKIES. HERE ARE THE TOP TIPS FROM OUR TEST KITCHEN.

MASTER FIRM AND FLOOD CONSISTENCIES.

Firm royal icing should be used to create firm outlines and borders for your cookies, while flood-consistency icing is the best way to create a pool of smooth icing within those borders. If icing is too thick, add more milk, and if it's too thin, add more confectioners' sugar. For reference, flood-consistency icing has the appearance of runny honey. It is also occasionally called 10-second icing because if you run your whisk through the icing, it should settle back down after 10 seconds.

USE MERINGUE POWDER.

In the old-fashioned royal icing recipes, egg whites were often used. With today's modern innovation, you can now use shelf-stable meringue powder to recreate the same quick-setting, smooth icing. You can buy this ingredient at specialty decorating stores, like Michael's, and online.

TINT WITH GEL FOOD COLORING.

We like to use gel food coloring to tint royal icing because it won't affect the consistency like liquid food coloring does.

FOR THE FINEST DETAILS, USE SQUEEZE BOTTLES AND FOOD-SAFE BRUSHES.

If you need to pipe miniscule ornaments, fine golden ribbons, or any other minute details onto your cookie, use smaller instruments like food-safe paintbrushes and easy-to-control squeeze bottles. (We like Wilton Cake Decorating Tools, 5-Piece Brush Set and Wilton Squeeze Bottles, found at Michaels and online.) Wooden picks are also excellent for swirling and marbling your icing on the fly.

IF YOU'RE NOT USING ROYAL ICING IMMEDIATELY, COVER WITH A DAMP PAPER TOWEL.

It's the nature of royal icing to harden and dry out—so if you get busy with other projects in the kitchen, be sure to cover the top of your royal icing with a damp paper towel to keep it fluid and fresh, but for no more than 1 hour. You can also put the icing in an airtight container.

ALWAYS LET YOUR ICING DRY FOR A FEW HOURS.

It can take your royal icing a good bit of time to set up, close to 3 to 4 hours. Don't rush this process—if you start to move your cookies or ice with new details, you'll risk smudging



WE BREAK DOWN THE PROCESS FOR THREE
SHOWSTOPPING ICING DESIGNS

Layered Boughs of Holly

Follow these simple steps to deck your sugar cookies with a festive wreath. Find the recipe on page 94.



STEP 1: Using a piping bag with plain white icing, pipe an outline along both edges of each cookie. This is the stiffer icing that will hold its shape and create a nice border. Let dry for 5 minutes



STEP 2: Add water to remaining white icing, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, until fluid. This is the flood-consistency icing, which should fall in a slow ribbon when whisked. Place in squeeze bottle, and fill in center of a cookie.



STEP 3: Immediately pipe small green dots using small squeeze bottle. This icing is also flood-consistency and will melt right into the white icing, forming tiny circles.



STEP 4: Using a wooden pick, continuously drag through center of cookie icing to create leaves. Let dry for 2 to 3 hours. You'll need the icing to set completely before piping the red berries so they appear three-dimensional.



STEP 5: Using a piping bag and red icing, pipe berries in groupings within the "leaves" around cookie. Let dry until hardened, about 30 minutes

Textured “Woven” Pattern

Frosting connoisseur Tessa Huff of *Style Sweet CA* adorns her cakes and cookies with incredible textured designs. All you need is royal icing and a few different piping tips to create this “woven” knit design on her Mitten Cookies (recipe on page 95).



STEP 1: Using an offset spatula, spread a thin coat of light blue royal icing around mitten cookie, leaving about $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch border un-iced. This prevents any cookie from showing through the piped icing.



STEP 2: Place Lemon Royal Icing in a piping bag fitted with a small petal tip (Wilton No. 101) or a small round tip (Wilton No. 5). Starting at edge of royal icing at one end of the cookie, pipe the blue royal icing into a vertical line of “V” shapes one after the other down the center of the cookie until you reach the opposite top edge of the royal icing. Point narrow end of petal tip away from your body and toward top of cookie as you pipe down length of cookie.



STEP 3: Switching to the white icing, turn cookie, and create a new row of alternating woven pattern. Repeat, alternating between the white and blue icings, until piped icing covers flooded royal icing completely. Let icing dry completely and harden before carefully storing cookies.

Watercolor Icing Art

Cookies are the perfect canvas for a holiday-scape—all you need is a simple glaze made with confectioners' sugar and whole milk. With her detailed “watercolor” icing designs, Elisabeth Farris of *Elisabeth & Butter* has become the Picasso of the cookie world. Follow these steps to recreate the present design featured on her Browned Butter Snickerdoodle Cutout Cookies (recipe on page 96). You can become the next cookie artist extraordinaire.



If you are using a loose icing like this, put an empty piping bag inside a jar, letting edge of bag hang over top of the jar, and spoon your icing in. Cut off the tip of piping bag, and outline each cookie with glaze. Let dry for 5 minutes.

After outline has set, fill it completely with glaze. (You can use a wooden pick or knife to spread it out and fill in holes.) Let glazed cookies stand at room temperature for at least 5 hours or overnight before decorating or painting.

Gel food coloring works best for painting with icing. Use brown, blue, green, and red to create the presents. Use a toothpick to place a few drops for each shade of gel food coloring on a sheet of wax paper or parchment paper.

Pour vodka or clear extract into a small bowl. To dilute your gel food coloring, dip your fine-tipped paintbrush into the vodka and gently combine with each shade of the food coloring on the wax paper. Rinse and dab your brush dry on a paper towel after each color.



STEP 1: Use the green to paint three squares of various sizes for the presents. After dipping your brush in the paint, lightly dab it on a paper towel so the colors don't become too wet and bleed.

STEP 2: Fill each outline with a different color or pattern. When changing colors, remember to rinse and dry your brush between each use.

STEP 3: If layering colors, let the base color dry for a few seconds before painting another layer. ▢

Double-Chocolate
Toffee Biscotti
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Chocolate Cookies

PIPED WITH GANACHE, DIPPED IN MOLTEN CHOCOLATE, OR DUSTED WITH COCOA, THESE INDULGENT COOKIES SPOTLIGHT CHOCOLATE IN ITS MOST FESTIVE FORMS

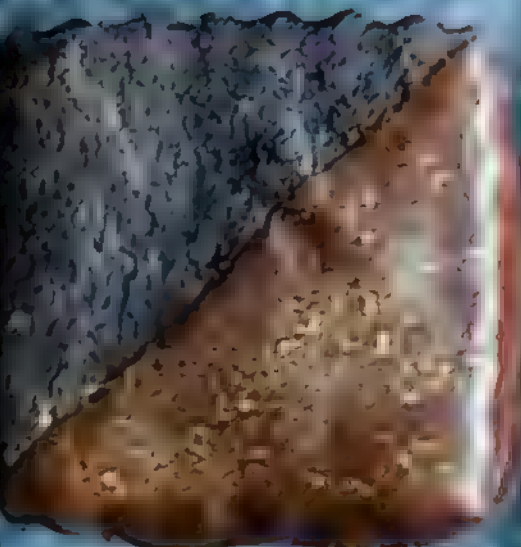
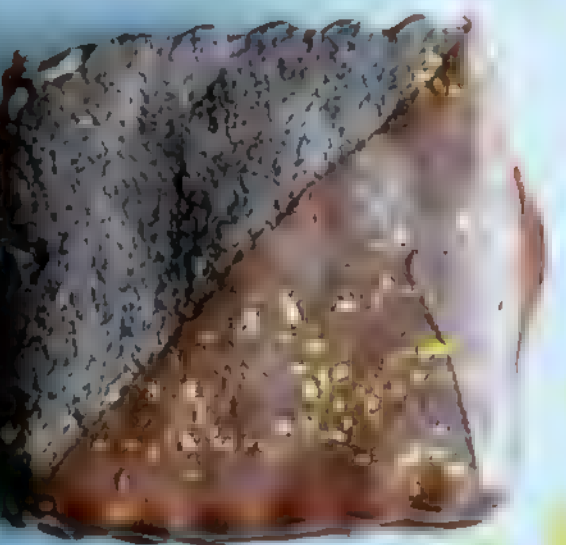
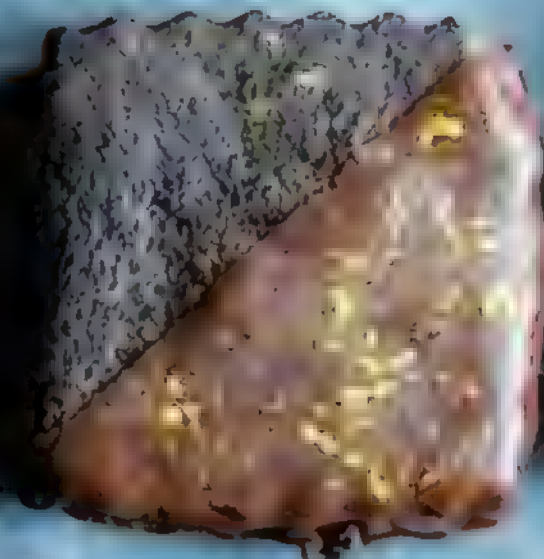
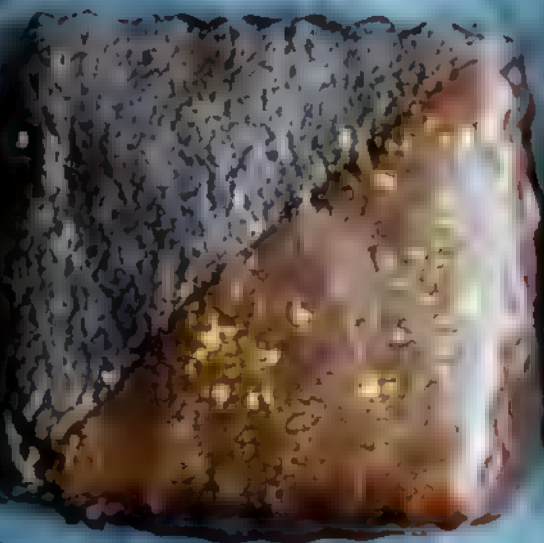
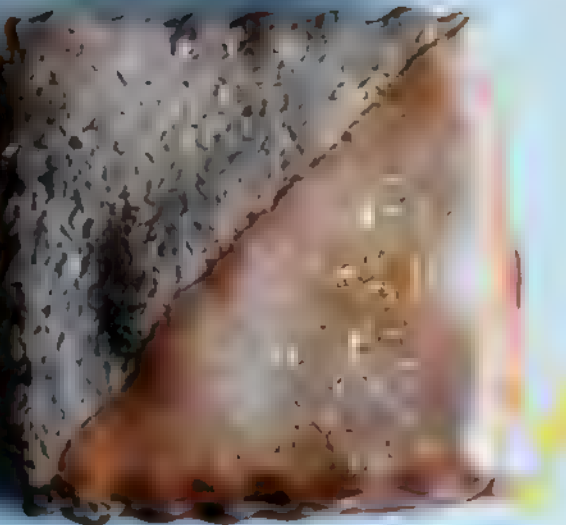
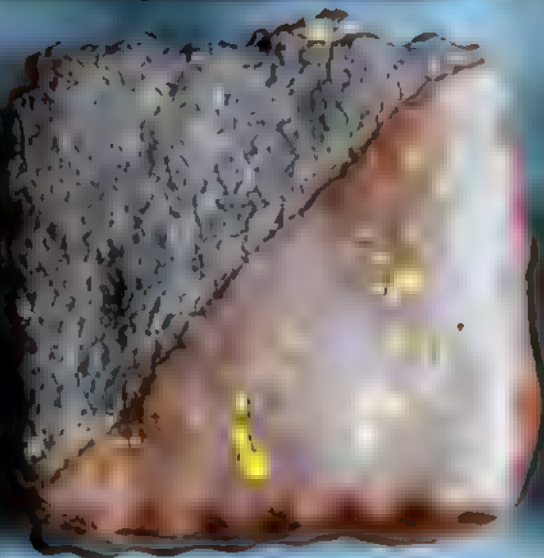
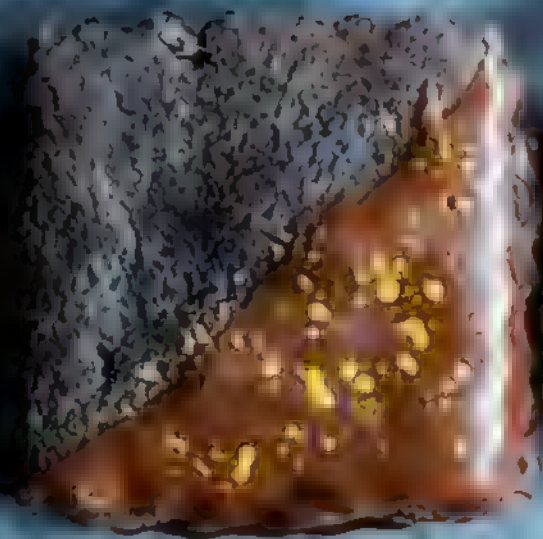




Triple-Chocolate
Hot Cocoa Cookies
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German Chocolate Sandwich
Cookies
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Double-Chocolate
Toffee Biscotti
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Chocolate Peppermint
Macarons



CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT MACARONS

Makes about 24 macarons

Recipe by Mike Johnson

These chocolate macarons are sprinkled with crushed candy canes and sandwiched together with a White Chocolate Peppermint Ganache. They're perfect for cookie exchanges, holiday gatherings, or alongside a cup of hot cocoa on a cold winter's night.

- 4 large egg whites (120 grams), room temperature**
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (124 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1⅓ cups (200 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1⅓ cups (128 grams) almond flour**
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) unsweetened Dutch process cocoa powder**
- 1 tablespoon (5 grams) black cocoa powder**
- Crushed peppermint candies* (optional)**
- White Chocolate Peppermint Ganache (recipe follows)**

1. Line baking sheets with silicone baking mats or parchment paper. If using parchment paper, use a pencil to draw 1½-inch circles 2 inches apart on parchment; turn parchment over.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites at medium speed until foamy and whisk begins leaving visible trails. Gradually add granulated sugar; increase mixer speed to high, and beat until stiff peaks form. (Do not overwhip, or you risk drying out your egg whites.)

3. In a medium bowl, sift together confectioners' sugar, almond flour, and cocoas. Using a rubber spatula, fold sugar mixture into egg white mixture from bottom of bowl upward; press flat side of spatula through middle against side of bowl. (The batter will look very thick at first, but it will get thinner as you fold.) Continue folding until batter reaches a lavalike consistency. (See PRO TIP.)

4. Transfer batter to a large piping bag fitted with a medium round tip (Wilton No. 2A). Holding piping bag at a 90-degree angle to surface, pipe 1½-inch circles 2 inches apart onto baking mats or pipe batter onto drawn circles if using parchment. Use a wet finger to gently smooth out any peaks. Lift pans to a height of 6 inches above counter, and drop to release any air bubbles. Repeat 3 or 4 times. (If you don't release the air bubbles, they will expand during baking and crack your beautiful macaron shells.) Let stand at room temperature until a skin has developed, about 30 minutes. (On a

humid day, it might take 1 hour or more.) To see if it's ready to be baked, lightly touch it. If the batter doesn't stick to your finger, it's ready.

5. Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C)

6. Bake, one batch at a time, for 18 to 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Sprinkle with crushed peppermints (if using) during final minute of baking. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. (If the bottoms are a bit sticky, keep them on the pan to cool for 10 to 15 minutes more. If, however, the bottoms are already browned, they peel off cleanly, or they appear overbaked, carefully take them off the pan immediately to cool down.) (See Note.)

7. Place White Chocolate Peppermint Ganache in a piping bag. Pipe White Chocolate Peppermint Ganache onto flat side of half of cookies (about 14 grams each). Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of ganache. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Serve at room temperature.

**Be sure to crush the peppermints very finely, almost to dust, to help prevent the peppermint from baking into the macarons.*

PRO TIP

The figure eight test is a great way to check your batter's consistency. Pick up the batter with your spatula, and let it flow down into the bowl while drawing the figure "8." If it can do that without the batter breaking, immediately stop folding

WHITE CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT GANACHE

Makes about 1½ cups

- 9 ounces (250 grams) 28% cacao white chocolate, chopped**
- ½ cup (80 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract**

1. Place chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl.

2. In a small saucepan, heat cream over medium heat, stirring frequently, just until bubbles form around edges of pan. (Do not boil.) Remove from heat.

3. Pour hot cream over chocolate; let stand for 3 minutes. Add peppermint extract; whisk until smooth. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of ganache. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

4. Transfer ganache to the bowl of a stand mixer with the whisk attachment; beat at medium speed until light and fluffy. Use immediately.

Note: Macarons are best enjoyed the next day, after they have matured in the refrigerator (since the flavors will be absorbed into the shell). If your shell is hard, crunchy, or overbaked, letting them mature will also cause the shells to absorb the moisture from the filling, softening them up and giving them their signature chewy texture. It's always better to overbake rather than underbake your macarons because the maturation process can typically salvage ones that are overbaked



GERMAN CHOCOLATE SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Elisabeth Farris

No mixer necessary for these chewy double-chocolate cookies filled with the most delicious Coconut Pecan Filling that melts in your mouth. Coconut lovers will fall in love all over again!

- 2½ cups (425 grams) 60% cacao dark chocolate chips, divided**
 - ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
 - 1¾ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
 - ¼ cup (21 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
 - 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
 - 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
 - ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
 - 3 large eggs (150 grams)**
 - ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
 - ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
 - 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- Coconut Pecan Filling (recipe follows)**

- 1.** In the top of a double boiler, combine 1½ cups (255 grams) chocolate chips and butter. Cook over simmering water, stirring frequently, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. (Alternatively, combine chocolate chips and butter in a large microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth.) Remove from heat; set aside.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.
- 3.** Add eggs, sugars, and vanilla to chocolate mixture, and whisk to combine. Add flour mixture to chocolate mixture, stirring just until combined. Fold in remaining 1 cup (170 grams) chocolate chips. Cover dough in bowl, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days.
- 4.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 5.** Using a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and shape into smooth, round balls (30 grams each). Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
- 6.** Bake until slightly cracked, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spoon 1 to 2 tablespoons Coconut Pecan Filling onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of filling. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *If you do not want to bake all of these cookies at once, the dough can be stored in a*

resealable plastic bag in the freezer. Freeze the scooped dough until solid on a baking sheet before transferring to a bag.

COCONUT PECAN FILLING

Makes about 2 cups

- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 cup (240 grams) evaporated milk**
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 3 large egg yolks (56 grams)**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1 cup (113 grams) chopped toasted pecans**
- 1 cup (60 grams) sweetened flaked coconut**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

- 1.** In a medium saucepan, bring brown sugar, evaporated milk, butter, and egg yolks to a low boil over medium heat, whisking occasionally; cook, stirring constantly, until mixture thickens, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla, pecans, and coconut. Let cool completely.

Note: *This filling can be made a day ahead and refrigerated until ready to use. Let come to room temperature before assembling cookies.*

DULCE DE LECHE BACI DI DAMA

Makes about 42 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Rebecca Firth

Baci di dama are petite Italian sandwich cookies made with ground hazelnuts, and the cookie base has cocoa powder added for that perfect hazelnut-chocolate combination that I love so much. These cookies are chocolaty without being too sweet, and they melt and crumble once bitten. For the filling, I created Dulce de Leche Buttercream so decadent, you'll want to eat by the spoonful.

- 1 cup (126 grams) raw hazelnuts, skinned and coarsely chopped**
 - 1 cup plus 1½ tablespoons (137 grams) all-purpose flour**
 - ½ cup (25 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder, sifted**
 - ½ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
 - ¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted**
 - ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) sea salt**
 - ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
 - 2 tablespoons (30 grams) whole milk**
 - 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- Dulce de Leche Buttercream (recipe follows)**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse hazelnuts until finely chopped and they have the appearance of fine bread crumbs. Add flour, cocoa, sugars, and sea salt, and pulse until completely combined. Scatter butter on top of hazelnut mixture; add milk and vanilla, and pulse for about 30 seconds to combine. Using a spatula, scrape sides and bottom of bowl to make sure everything is combined. Shape dough into 1-teaspoon (6-gram) balls, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
- 3.** Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Dulce de Leche Buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream.

DULCE DE LECHE BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 2 cups

- 1¾ cups (420 grams) whole milk**
- ¾ cup (133 grams) plus ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- ¼ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- ½ vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved**
- ½ teaspoon sea salt, divided**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
- 2 large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature**
- 3 tablespoons (63 grams) corn syrup**
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter**

- 1.** In a large saucepan, whisk together milk, ¾ cup (133 grams) sugar, cream, vanilla bean and reserved seeds, and ¼ teaspoon sea salt; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce to a simmer; whisk in baking soda. Cook, stirring occasionally and adjusting temperature to keep it from boiling (see PRO TIP), for 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a heatproof bowl. (You will have about ¾ cup.) Refrigerate in an airtight container until ready to use. It will thicken more as it cools.
- 2.** Place egg whites, remaining ¾ cup (100 grams) sugar, and remaining ¼ teaspoon sea salt in the bowl of a stand mixer; place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking occasionally, until mixture no longer feels gritty when rubbed between two fingers and an instant-read thermometer registers 155°F (68°C) to 160°F (71°C). Return bowl to stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, and beat at high speed until bowl feels cool to the touch, 5 to 6 minutes. Add butter, a piece



at a time, beating until well combined after each addition. Beat until mixture is smooth, glossy, and voluminous. Beat in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (104 grams) dulce de leche; reserve remaining dulce de leche for another use

Note: *The cookies come together quickly, but take note of the cook time for the dulce de leche in the buttercream so you can plan accordingly. You can also use store-bought dulce de leche in place of this homemade version.*

PRO TIP

When preparing the Dulce de Leche, you just want some bubbles around the edges of the pan. After 30 to 45 minutes, the color will start to deepen and the mixture will begin to thicken a bit. When this happens, it'll be more prone to a heavy boil, which is bad, so continue adjusting the temperature as needed and stirring more frequently. This dulce de leche deepens and thickens faster than usual because of the addition of cream, so keep an eye on it. You want it to have a nice, thick consistency and a bronzed and deep caramel appearance.

CHOCOLATE HALVAH SANDWICH COOKIES WITH CARDAMOM BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 16 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

When I was growing up, my mom would make a chocolate cardamom milkshake that was delicious, and these cookies are inspired by that drink! Halvah has a nutty flavor and combines really well with chocolate—a match made in heaven. Add cardamom to the mix and you get luxurious cookies, especially with the chocolate coating and gold specks. These make for beautiful, festive cookies that are perfect for entertaining!

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
1¼ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour
⅓ cup (32 grams) almond flour
¼ cup (21 grams) dark cocoa powder, plus more for rolling
1 teaspoon (6 grams) table salt
½ cup (65 grams) shredded halvah*
1½ cups (255 grams) chocolate chips
1½ tablespoons (21 grams) coconut oil
Small food-safe paintbrush
Edible gold paint*
Cardamom Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at high speed until combined, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl with a rubber spatula. Add vanilla, and beat on low until incorporated, about 15 seconds.
2. In a medium bowl, sift together flours, cocoa, and salt. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture, gradually increasing speed to medium until the mixture starts coming together, about 2 minutes. Add halvah, and beat until well incorporated. (Dough should be dark brown without any specks of halvah showing. It will look a bit crumbly, but don't worry—it will come together in the fridge when it sets.)
3. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Dust a sheet of parchment paper with cocoa. Turn out dough onto parchment, and dust with cocoa. Top with another sheet of parchment paper, and roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Remove top layer of parchment; using a 2-inch square cutter, cut dough. Using a small offset spatula, gently remove cookies, and place on prepared pans. Repeat process with dough scraps. Freeze for 10 minutes.

6. Bake for 12 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack, about 1 hour.

7. In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine chocolate and oil; microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth (1½ minutes total).

8. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Dip cookies halfway into chocolate mixture, shaking off excess. Place cookies on a prepared pans, and freeze until chocolate is set, about 10 minutes.

9. Cover the undipped half of 1 cookie with a piece of parchment paper. Dip brush in edible gold paint, and flick paint onto chocolate-covered portion of cookie. Freeze for 2 minutes. Repeat process with all remaining cookies.

10. Place Cardamom Buttercream in a piping bag fitted with a ⅛-inch round tip (Ateco #804), and pipe buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**I used AmeriColor Amerimist Airbrush Color in Gold Sheen, available at amazon.com. You can also combine dry edible gold dust with a couple drops of any alcohol like rum, or vodka, mix, and use that mixture as paint. I like Super Gold Luster Dust, available on amazon.com.*

CARDAMOM BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 1½ cups

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
½ teaspoon (3 grams) table salt
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom
2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, vanilla, salt, and cardamom until combined, about

30 seconds. Scrape sides of bowl. Add confectioners' sugar, and beat on low for about 30 seconds. Gradually increase speed to high, and beat until well incorporated, about 1 minute. Use immediately.

TRIPLE-CHOCOLATE HOT COCOA COOKIES

Makes about 24 cookies

Recipe by Laura Crandall

With milk chocolate and drinking chocolate in the batter and a luscious White Chocolate Ganache center, these tender cookies offer all the comfort and coziness of a cup of hot cocoa. A blend of cocoa and ground red pepper sprinkled on top adds warmth and subtle spice to each bite.

¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
2 large egg yolks (37 grams)*
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
½ cup (85 grams) chopped milk chocolate, melted and slightly cooled
2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
⅓ cup (40 grams) unsweetened drinking chocolate powder
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
White Chocolate Ganache (recipe follows)
1 tablespoon (5 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground red pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg yolks and vanilla. Beat in cooled-melted chocolate.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, drinking chocolate, salt, and baking powder. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into smooth balls (29 grams each). Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Using the back of the scoop, gently make an indentation in center of each ball.

4. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes. Remove from oven, and press down centers again. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Pipe White Chocolate Ganache into center of each cookie. In a small bowl, stir together cocoa and red pepper. Dust cocoa mixture onto cookies.

WHITE CHOCOLATE GANACHE

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 cup (170 grams) chopped white chocolate**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream**

1. Place white chocolate in a large heatproof bowl.
2. In a small saucepan, bring cream just to a boil over medium heat. Pour hot cream over white chocolate. Let stand for 1 minute; whisk until smooth. Refrigerate, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 30 minutes.

DOUBLE-CHOCOLATE TOFFEE BISCUOTTI

Makes 24 biscotti

Recipe by Michele Song

These twice-baked chocolate-toffee-almond biscotti are the perfect treat to dunk into your morning cup of coffee. They're filled with homemade Toffee Bits, toasted chopped almonds, and chopped dark chocolate chunks and then dipped in melted dark chocolate for good measure and topped with more Toffee Bits. The addition of espresso powder enhances the chocolate flavor, and the butter gives the biscotti a tender texture.

- 6 tablespoons (84 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
- 2 cups (250 grams) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (64 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) espresso powder**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 1 cup (170 grams) chopped 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate**
- Toffee Bits (recipe follows), divided**

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (85 grams) chopped toasted almonds**
- 1 large egg white (30 grams), lightly beaten**
- 8 ounces (225 grams) 60% cacao bittersweet chocolate, melted**

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, brown sugar, and vanilla at medium speed until fluffy, 4 to 5 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat for 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, cocoa, baking powder, espresso powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture all at once, and beat just until combined. In another medium bowl, combine chopped chocolate, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (106 grams) Toffee Bits, and almonds. Add chocolate mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined.
4. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and divide in half. Using well-floured hands, roll each half into a log. Place logs on prepared pan, and gently pat each into a 10x2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch log. Dough will be sticky, so you may need to add extra flour to surface and hands. (Make sure logs are spaced about 3 inches apart to allow for spreading.) Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
6. Brush top of logs with egg white.
7. Bake until tops are cracked and firm, 30 to 35 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F (150°C). Transfer logs to

a cutting board. Using a serrated knife, gently cut warm logs crosswise on a diagonal into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick slices. Place slices, side by side and cut side down, on baking sheet.

8. Bake for 10 minutes. Turn, and bake until edges are dry but center is still slightly soft, about 10 minutes more. Let cool completely on pan.
9. Dip bottom of biscotti in melted chocolate, and immediately sprinkle with remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (106 grams) Toffee Bits. Place dipped biscotti back on pans. Let stand until chocolate is set, 30 to 45 minutes

TOFFEE BITS

Makes about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water**
- 2 teaspoons (14 grams) light corn syrup**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**

1. Line a baking sheet with a nonstick baking mat.
2. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add sugar and all remaining ingredients, stirring to combine. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook until sugar begins to caramelize, about 5 minutes.
3. As soon as caramel turns a dark amber color, remove from heat, stir a few times, and pour onto prepared pan. Let toffee harden and set, about 20 minutes. Coarsely chop into bits.

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Buttery Cookies

THE CROWD WILL GO WILD FOR A BITE OF THESE SPRINKLE-STUDED SABLÉS, SPICED SHORTBREAD, AND EVERY CRUMBLY COOKIE IN BETWEEN



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Sandwich Sablés
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CRÈME FRAÎCHE SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes about 18 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Laura Kasavan

These melt-in-your-mouth crème fraîche cookies will be the star of your holiday cookie platter! Sandwiched with sweet Vanilla Frosting and rolled in holiday sprinkles, you'll love each buttery bite.

1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened

¾ cup (180 grams) crème fraîche

1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar

3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon (8 grams) cornstarch

Vanilla Frosting (recipe follows)

¼ cup (45 grams) holiday sprinkles*

1. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and crème fraîche at medium speed until combined, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in vanilla and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until incorporated.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and cornstarch. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a soft dough forms. Divide dough in half. Transfer half of dough to a large piping bag fitted with a large closed star tip (Wilton No. 2D). Pipe 2½-inch spirals 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining dough. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. Bake until lightly golden, 14 to 16 minutes, rotating pans once. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Pipe or spoon 1 to 2 tablespoons Vanilla Frosting onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of filling, gently pressing together until filling reaches edges of cookies. Roll cookies in sprinkles. Place cookies in a single layer on a baking sheet, and refrigerate for 20 minutes before serving.

**I used Wilton Holiday Nonpareils.*

VANILLA FROSTING

Makes about 3 cups

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract

3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar

1 tablespoon (15 grams) milk

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at medium speed until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in extracts. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until incorporated. Add milk, and beat at medium speed until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Use immediately.





BUTTER PECAN SNOWBALL COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

Butter Pecan Snowball Cookies were the holiday cookies of my childhood! My mom made tin after tin of these buttery bites. They are so simple to make, use staple pantry ingredients, and resemble little bite-size snowballs, which makes them super festive. The pecans add a little crunch to the cookie, but if you don't have pecans, try any nut you have on hand.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- ½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar, plus more for rolling**
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) fine sea salt**
- ½ cup (57 grams) finely chopped pecans**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at low speed until combined, about 2 minutes. Beat in vanilla.

3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour and sea salt. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until dough comes together. Fold in pecans. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and use hands to shape into a 1½-inch dough ball (25 grams). Place dough balls on prepared pans. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

4. Bake until bottoms are lightly golden, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes. Roll in confectioners' sugar. Let cool completely, and roll in confectioners' sugar again. Cover and store at room temperature for up to 2 days, or freeze for up to 2 weeks.

HOLIDAY SPRINKLE SABLÉS

Makes about 24 cookies

Recipe by Laura Kasavan

Buttery sablés get a holiday makeover! Festive holiday sprinkles add color and crunch to these easy slice-and-bake cookies.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- ¾ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)**

- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**
- 2½ cups (292 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 10 tablespoons (112.5 grams) holiday sprinkles*, divided**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add sugars and salt, and beat until smooth, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolk and extracts, and beat until combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating just until combined. Gently beat in 6 tablespoons (67.5 grams) sprinkles.
- 2.** Divide dough in half, and turn out each half onto a piece of plastic wrap. Roll each half into a 7-inch log, using plastic wrap to help shape soft dough. Wrap logs tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or up to 2 days.
- 3.** Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4.** Using a sharp knife, cut logs into ½-inch-thick rounds. Place rounds 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Freeze for 1 hour.
- 5.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
- 6.** Top cookies with remaining 4 tablespoons (45 grams) sprinkles.

7. Bake until golden, 16 to 18 minutes, rotating pans once halfway through baking. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

**I used Wilton Holiday Jimmies Sprinkles because the colors don't bleed*

PRO TIP

For uniformly round slice-and-bake cookies, cut two empty paper towel rolls in half lengthwise. Refrigerate logs of dough inside center of each cardboard roll until firm.

SPICED SHORTBREAD COOKIES WITH CARAMELIZED WHITE CHOCOLATE

Makes 32 cookies

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

I doctored my great-grandmother's shortbread recipe a little here. Hers were slice-and-bake cookies, which I have turned into a roll-out cutout cookie. I added some of my favourite warming spices and finished off the cookie by dipping half of it into caramelized white chocolate, also known as blond chocolate. The toasty flavour of the chocolate pairs so perfectly with the spiced shortbread. I don't think Grandma would be super stoked that I am messing with her recipe, but this slight variation on a classic is too good to pass up.

- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (255 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup (80 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 6.5 ounces (187.5 grams) blond chocolate*, chopped
- 1 to 2 tablespoons (14 to 28 grams) coconut oil (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, vanilla, and salt at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes.

3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cardamom, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, ginger, and nutmeg. Add flour mixture to butter mixture all at once, and beat at low speed just until combined.

4. Cut 2 (18x13-inch) sheets of parchment paper. Transfer dough to 1 sheet of parchment, and press into a rough rectangle using your hands. (Dough will be sticky.) Cover with second sheet of parchment. Roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. (If you get wrinkles in paper, carefully peel it off and place it back onto dough, smoothing down.) Transfer dough, between parchment, to a prepared pan. Freeze until firm, 15 to 20 minutes.

5. Remove top sheet of parchment. Using a 2½-inch fluted round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place on prepared pans. (If dough starts to warm up too much at any point, place it in freezer to firm up.) Freeze for at least 10 minutes.

6. Bake, one batch at a time, until shortbread is set and only very slightly golden around the edges, 13 to 14 minutes. Let cool on pans for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

7. In the top of a double boiler, heat blond chocolate over simmering water, stirring frequently, until melted and smooth. (Alternatively, microwave chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth.) If chocolate is too thick, stir in coconut oil, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, if needed, until mixture is melted and smooth.

8. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Working with 1 cookie at a time, dip half of cookie into melted blond chocolate, letting excess drip off. Place cookies on prepared pans. Refrigerate until set. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**I used Valrhona Blond Dulcey 32% Chocolate. If you'd like to make your own caramelized white chocolate, visit bakefromscratch.com.*

Notes: The undipped cookies can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature, but once you have dipped them in the chocolate, they need to be stored in the refrigerator.

If you prefer, this dough can be prepared ahead of time. Store it tightly wrapped in plastic wrap in the refrigerator. However, because the dough is frozen before being cut out, you can also skip the chilling step and roll out the dough straight from the mixer.

PRO TIP

Pre-cut parchment sheets are great for rolling out the dough. They are the same size as a half sheet pan, meaning that transferring the dough to a baking sheet to chill up is super easy. I also like to use them as a guide to roll out the dough because the dough is sticky.



EMPIRE COOKIES

Makes 24 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Laura Kasavan

Empire biscuits are a traditional Scottish bakery treat, and it's easy to see why. Rich and buttery shortbread cookies filled with raspberry preserves and topped with Almond Glaze make an irresistible sandwich cookie.

- 1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 3½ cups (438 grams) all-purpose flour**
- Almond Glaze (recipe follows)**
- ¼ cup (240 grams) raspberry preserves**
- 12 maraschino cherries* (44 grams), halved**
- Garnish: sparkling sugar**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in extracts and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour, beating until incorporated and dough comes together in large pieces. Divide dough in half, and turn out each half onto a piece of plastic wrap. (Dough may be a little crumbly, but it will come together as you shape.) Shape each half into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.
- 2.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

- 3.** On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2-inch fluted round cutter dipped in flour, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Refrigerate for 15 minutes. Repeat with remaining dough.
- 4.** Bake until lightly golden and set, 14 to 16 minutes, rotating pans once. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
- 5.** Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Lightly dip top of half of cookies in Almond Glaze. Place glazed cookies on prepared pans. Let stand until set, about 1 hour.
- 6.** Pipe or spoon raspberry preserves in center of remaining cookies. Place glazed cookies, flat side down, on top of filling, and gently sandwich together. Let stand for 1 hour. Top cookies with a cherry half, cut side down. Garnish with sparkling sugar, if desired.

**Drain maraschino cherries well, and pat dry with paper towels before using.*

ALMOND GLAZE

Makes about 1 cup

- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) hot water**
- ¼ teaspoon (3 grams) almond extract**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

- 1.** In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Use immediately.

ESPRESSO CHOCOLATE SANDWICH SABLÉS

Makes 25 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

Slice-and-bake cookies are the perfect holiday treat because you can make the dough and have it ready and waiting in the freezer should anyone pop 'round unannounced. They can be baked from frozen, meaning you can have cookies on the table in mere minutes. The dough for these cookies is a classic vanilla sablé, but to give them another pop of flavor and a more grown-up, sophisticated hue, I added freshly ground coffee to the dough. And what cookie, especially one made with coffee, is truly finished without some element of chocolate? For these sablés, the chocolate comes in the form of a simple ganache filling.

- ¾ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams)**
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 tablespoons (12 grams) freshly ground coffee**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 3.5 ounces (101 grams) 60% to 70% cacao dark chocolate, finely chopped**
- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon (95 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat softened butter at medium speed until creamy. Add

confectioners' sugar, and beat until well combined and smooth, about 1 minute. Add egg yolks and vanilla bean paste, and beat just until fully combined. Add flour, coffee, and salt, and beat at low speed just until flour is incorporated but before dough forms a ball.

2. Turn out dough onto a floured surface, and use your hands to bring dough together. Divide dough in half, and roll into 1½-inch-wide logs. Wrap logs in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, 1 to 2 hours.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Unwrap logs, and cut into ¼-inch-thick rounds. Place rounds 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until just lightly browned around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

6. Place chocolate in a large heatproof bowl. In a small saucepan, bring cream and butter to a simmer over medium heat. Pour hot cream mixture over chocolate. Let stand for 1 minute; stir until a smooth, silky ganache forms. Let stand until thickened, 30 minutes to 1 hour.

7. Scoop ganache into a piping bag fitted with a small round piping tip. Pipe a round of ganache onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of ganache. Let stand until ganache is set, 1 to 2 hours. Unfilled cookies will keep for 2 to 3 days. Once they are filled with ganache, the cookies are best served within a day.





Hot Buttered Rum Rugelach
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Boozy Cookies

MAKE YOUR HOLIDAYS EXTRA MERRY WITH THESE SPIRITED RECIPES SPIKED WITH
EGGNOG, CHAMPAGNE, BOURBON, AND MORE



Chocolate Chip Sandwich Cookies
with Irish Cream German Buttercream
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Bourbon-Spiked Apple Cider Cookies
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Hot Buttered Rum Rugelach



HOT BUTTERED RUM RUGELACH

Makes 36 cookies

Recipe by Michele Song

These rum-spiked rugelach are inspired by the classic holiday drink and are sure to be a hit at the adult table. The cream cheese rugelach dough is super buttery and flaky, and the brown sugar filling has chopped spiced pecans with hints of ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. The glaze is also spiked with rum, so don't be shy with those drizzles!

- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 cup (227 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 8 ounces (225 grams) cold cream cheese, cubed
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon (21 grams) honey
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) dark or spiced rum
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- Hot Buttered Rum Spiced Pecans (recipe follows), chopped
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water
- Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling
- Rum Glaze (recipe follows)

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse together flour, granulated sugar, and salt until combined. Add cold butter, cold cream cheese, and vanilla, and pulse 3 to 4 times; hold just until dough comes together, about 30 seconds. (Do not overwork dough.) Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and divide into 3 equal portions. Shape each portion into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together brown sugar, honey, rum, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves. Cover and set aside.
3. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll 1 portion of dough into a 10-inch circle. Spoon one-third of brown sugar mixture onto dough, and spread using an offset spatula. Sprinkle with one-third of Hot Buttered Rum Spiced Pecans. Gently press pecans into dough to ensure they stick. Using a pizza wheel, cut dough into 12 wedges. Starting at base of each triangle, carefully roll up dough and filling into a log. Place on

- prepared pans, tucking ends under. Repeat with remaining dough, remaining brown sugar mixture, and remaining Hot Buttered Rum Spiced Pecans. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C)
 6. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water. Brush egg wash onto dough, and sprinkle with turbinado sugar.
 7. Bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking (see Note). Let cool completely on pans. Drizzle with Rum Glaze. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: Some of the spiced sugar filling will ooze out during baking. This is normal. Once you've let your rugelach cool completely on the pan, the puddles of spiced sugar filling will detach easily from the cookies and leave them clean and crisp.

HOT BUTTERED RUM SPICED PECANS

Makes 1 cup

- 1 cup (100 grams) pecan halves
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) dark rum
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Spread pecans in an even layer on prepared pan.
3. Bake until fragrant, 5 to 7 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking.
4. In a medium bowl, stir together granulated sugar, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves.
5. In a medium saucepan, bring rum, brown sugar, butter, and vanilla to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add toasted pecans, stirring to coat; cook until glaze is absorbed and pecans are shiny, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer pecans to spice mixture, and toss to coat. Return to parchment-lined baking sheet to let cool. Store in an airtight container.

RUM GLAZE

Makes ½ cup

- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) dark or spiced rum
- ¾ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) milk
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. In a small saucepan, heat butter and rum over medium heat until butter is melted and bubbly. Remove from heat; transfer to a small bowl. Add confectioners' sugar, milk, and cinnamon, whisking until smooth. Use immediately.



CHOCOLATE CHIP SANDWICH COOKIES WITH IRISH CREAM GERMAN BUTTERCREAM

Makes 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

Loaded with chopped chocolate, this thin cookie is sandwiched with my absolute favourite frosting, German buttercream. Because this versatile frosting is pastry cream-based, you can infuse the milk or, in this case, sub it out for Irish cream liqueur, which makes the most luxurious and creamy buttercream, bursting with Irish cream flavour. This really is the perfect pairing.

- 1½ cups (284 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (224 grams) granulated sugar**
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (101 grams) muscovado sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
- 13 ounces (375 grams) 70% cacao chocolate, chopped**
- Irish Cream German Buttercream (recipe follows)**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 to 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, egg yolk, and vanilla, beating until incorporated.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, sift together flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda. Add flour mixture to butter mixture all at once, and beat at low speed just until combined. Using a rubber spatula, fold in chopped chocolate. (Do not overwork dough.)
- 4.** Use a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 6 balls of dough on 1 prepared pan. (Leave remaining dough in bowl until ready to bake.)
- 5.** Bake until set around edges, 11 to 12 minutes. (Cookies will puff up in the oven and then flatten out as they cool.) If the cookies come out of the oven not perfectly round, you can use a cookie cutter slightly larger than the cookie to help nudge it back into place and make it round. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes.

Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.

- 6.** Place Irish Cream German Buttercream in a large piping bag fitted with a French star tip (Ateco #865). Pipe a round of Irish Cream German Buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PRO TIP

The cookie dough can be made ahead and frozen. If you want to freeze the dough, scoop it all out into balls onto a parchment paper-lined sheet pan (it is OK if the balls are close together), and then freeze until solid. Once frozen, transfer them to an airtight freezer-safe container. You will need to add 1 to 2 minutes to the baking time to account for the frozen dough.

IRISH CREAM GERMAN BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 3 cups

- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoons (112 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1½ tablespoons (12 grams) cornstarch**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¾ cup plus 1½ teaspoons (187.5 grams) Irish cream liqueur***
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**

- 1.** In a medium bowl, whisk together sugar and cornstarch. Add egg, egg yolk, and salt, whisking until well combined.
- 2.** In a medium saucepan, heat liqueur and vanilla over low heat just until bubbles form around edges of pan. (Do not boil.) Remove from heat.
- 3.** Whisking constantly, pour half of hot liqueur mixture into egg mixture. Add egg mixture to remaining hot liqueur mixture in pan, whisking to combine. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until bubbly and thickened. Cook 1 minute more; remove from heat.
- 4.** Pour pastry cream into a shallow container. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface to prevent a skin

from forming. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. (Alternatively, place pastry cream in a bowl, and place bowl in an ice bath. Let stand, stirring frequently, until cold.)

- 5.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat pastry cream at medium speed until creamy and lump-free. Add butter, a few cubes at a time, until fully incorporated. (It may look curdled at some point, but just keep whipping, and it will come together.) Switch to the paddle attachment. Beat at low speed for 2 to 3 minutes to help remove any air bubbles. Store in an airtight container until ready to use. If you need to chill it, you can let it rewarm slightly and then beat it in mixer to help smooth it out.

**I used Baileys Original Irish Cream.*

CHOCOLATE CHUNK ORANGE SHORTBREAD WITH SICHUAN PEPPERCORNS

Makes 48 cookies

Recipe by Rebecca Firth

Booze and chocolate with a touch of heat from the peppercorns—what more could you ask for in a cookie? This shortbread has chocolate chunks, orange zest, and a nice earthiness from the buckwheat flour, making it the perfect cookie to pair with a drink at the end of a holiday meal. Make sure you grind up the peppercorns well and even sift before adding to the dough as you don't want any larger bits in your cookie.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
- ¾ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- 2 tablespoons (6 grams) orange zest**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (5 grams) orange liqueur*, divided**
- 1½ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ½ cup (75 grams) buckwheat flour**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) finely ground Sichuan peppercorns (see Note)**
- 10.5 ounces (300 grams) 60% cacao dark chocolate, finely chopped and divided**
- ½ cup (100 grams) sparkling sugar**
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and



confectioners' sugar at medium speed until smooth and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add egg yolk, beating until combined. Add orange zest and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) orange liqueur, beating until combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, salt, and peppercorn. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat just until combined. Add 7 ounces (200 grams) chocolate, beating until combined.

3. Divide dough in half (about 420 grams each), and roll each half into a log (1½ inches wide and 12 inches long). Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and freeze for 45 minutes. Transfer dough to refrigerator.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. Place sparkling sugar on a piece of parchment paper. Roll each log in sugar to coat completely. Working with 1 log at a time (keep remaining log in refrigerator), cut log into ½-inch-thick slices and place on prepared pans.

6. Bake, one batch at a time, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

7. In a small heatproof bowl, place remaining 3.5 ounces (100 grams) chocolate. In a small saucepan, heat cream until simmering. Pour over chocolate, and let stand for 1 minute. Slowly stir together until smooth. Stir in remaining 1 teaspoon (5 grams) orange liqueur. Let cool slightly. Using a spoon, drizzle chocolate onto cookies.

■
**I used Cointreau*

Note: Sichuan peppercorn is available at most specialty food stores or online. You can also use 1 teaspoon (2 grams) finely ground black pepper.

Chocolate Chunk Orange
Shortbread with Sichuan Peppercorns



ORANGE ZEST SHORTBREAD WITH CRANBERRY-CHAMPAGNE BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

The flavors of this cookie scream holidays, parties, and festivities. They are a riff on the cranberry mimosa, and I guarantee you that these sparkly, elegant cookies will go very quickly at your next holiday brunch party. Do not forget to serve the mimosas.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon (3 grams) orange zest
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (64 grams) almond flour
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) table salt
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground star anise
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 6 teaspoons (30 grams) cranberry juice
- Edible silver sprinkles
- Cranberry-Champagne Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and orange zest at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add vanilla, beating until incorporated.

2. In a medium bowl, combine flours, salt, and star anise. With mixer on medium-low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined.

3. Divide dough in half, and shape each half into a disk, about 1 inch thick. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Using a 2-inch fluted round cutter, cut dough, and place on prepared pans.

6. Bake until light golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool on wire racks for 30 minutes.

7. In a small bowl, stir together confectioners' sugar and cranberry juice with a small rubber spatula until well combined. Drizzle on top of half of cookies. Top with sprinkles.

8. Pipe Cranberry-Champagne Buttercream onto flat side of undecorated cookies with a $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch round tip (Ateco #804). Place decorated cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

CRANBERRY-CHAMPAGNE BUTTERCREAM

Makes about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3 grams) table salt
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (300 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) Champagne
- 1 tablespoon (20 grams) Cranberry Jam* (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, salt, and vanilla at medium speed until combined, about 30 seconds, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add confectioners' sugar, Champagne, and Cranberry Jam, and beat on low, about 30 seconds. Gradually increase speed to high, beating until fully combined, about 1 minute.

*You can also use any tart red store-bought jam.

CRANBERRY JAM

Makes about ½ cup

- 1 cup (170 grams) fresh or frozen cranberries**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup (60 grams) water**
- ¼ cup (60 grams) orange juice**

1. In a medium saucepan, bring cranberries, sugar, ¼ cup (60 grams) water, and orange juice to a boil over medium-high heat. Let boil for about 5 minutes. Using a masher, crush cranberries to release pulp. Let boil until thickened, about 5 minutes. Using a fine-mesh sieve, strain mixture, discarding solids. Pour jam into a small bottle; let cool completely in refrigerator before use.

EGGNOG THUMBPRINT COOKIES

Makes 18 cookies

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

There is nothing I crave more around the holiday season than a glass (or two) of eggnog. These cookies are like biting into a cup of holiday cheer featuring the three important flavours of eggnog: cinnamon, nutmeg, and rum. A unique treat perfect for endless cookie exchanges!

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
- ½ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) spiced rum**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt**
- Eggnog Frosting (recipe follows)**
- Turbinado sugar, for sprinkling**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Beat in egg; beat in rum and vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder, and sea salt. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until dough comes together. Shape

dough into 1½-inch balls (about 23 grams), and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Using your thumb or the back of a spoon, gently make an indentation in center of each ball. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

4. Bake until edges are slightly golden, 11 to 13 minutes. Let cool completely.
5. Place Eggnog Frosting in a piping bag fitted with a star tip. Pipe a dollop of Eggnog Frosting into center of each cookie. Sprinkle with turbinado sugar. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days, or freeze for up to 2 weeks.

EGGNOG FROSTING

Makes about 1 cup

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt**
- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) eggnog**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Reduce speed to medium-low. Beat in vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, and sea salt. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar, ¼ cup (30 grams) at a time, until creamy and smooth. Beat in eggnog until blended. Use immediately.

BOURBON-SPIKED APPLE CIDER COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Elisabeth Farris

Filled with real apple cider and chopped apples, these Bourbon-Spiked Apple Cider Cookies are moist and delicious. The Bourbon Glaze takes these cookies to another level and makes them the perfect cookie for the holidays.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams)**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1¼ cups (300 grams) apple cider**
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda**

- 1 cup (110 grams) finely chopped Granny Smith apple**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) fresh lemon juice**
- Bourbon Glaze (recipe follows)**

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, beating well.
3. In a medium saucepan, heat cider over medium-high heat until thickened and reduced to 2 tablespoons, 10 to 15 minutes. (An instant-read thermometer should read no less than 150°F [65°C].) You can pour the reduced cider into a glass measuring cup to check the volume. (This transfer will also help the foam to subside.) Let cool for 1 to 2 minutes. (It will harden if cooled any longer.) Beat reduced cider into butter mixture.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, salt, and baking soda. In a small bowl, toss together apple and lemon juice. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Stir in apple mixture. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough into balls (about 25 grams), and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until golden brown but still soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Using a piping bag or spoon, drizzle Bourbon Glaze onto cooled cookies. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *The apple cider reduction will harden if not used within a few minutes, so make sure to beat it into the batter while it's still warm.*

BOURBON GLAZE

Makes about ½ cup

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) bourbon**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) apple cider**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the confectioners' sugar, bourbon, and apple cider until smooth. Use immediately.



Drop Cookies

FROM GINGERBREAD CRINKLE COOKIES TO WHITE CHOCOLATE-DIPPED RED VELVET BITES, THESE RECIPES WILL BE THERE FOR YOU WHEN YOU'RE SHORT ON TIME AND LONG ON HOLIDAY CRAVINGS











Hazelnut, Fig, and White Chocolate
Oatmeal Cookies
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RED VELVET PEPPERMINT COOKIES

Makes about 22 cookies

Recipe by Laura Crandall

Dipped in smooth white chocolate and finished off with soft peppermint candies, these chewy red velvet cookies are sure to satisfy your holiday sweet tooth.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- ¾ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
- ½ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams)**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) liquid red food coloring**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) distilled white vinegar**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract**
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup (21 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
- 1 (10-ounce) bag (283.5 grams) white chocolate melting wafers**
- Garnish: crushed soft peppermint candies**

- 1.** Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, beating well. Beat in food coloring, vinegar, and extracts.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Using a ½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place on prepared pan. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- 4.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Place chilled dough at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
- 5.** Bake until cookies look dry and edges are set, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.
- 6.** In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat white chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth. Dip cookies halfway in melted white chocolate, and transfer to a sheet of parchment paper. Sprinkle with crushed peppermints, if desired. Let set before serving.

BURNT SUGAR BOURBON GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Makes 50 cookies

Recipe by Rebecca Firth

Newsflash! Burnt sugar isn't really burnt, just caramelized, giving it a toasted marshmallow vibe that I jazzed up with some bourbon because why not? These cookies have heaps of holiday flavor and are just as gorgeous without the boozy buttercream as they are with it. But when all is said and done, make the buttercream—you won't regret it.

- 1½ cups (350 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) bourbon, divided**
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 2 cups (440 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- ¾ cup (226 grams) unsulphured molasses**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1½ cups (191 grams) bread flour**
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground ginger**
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground cinnamon**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) sea salt**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground allspice**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom**
- ½ teaspoon grated fresh nutmeg**
- Bourbon Buttercream (recipe follows)**
- Garnish: demerara sugar**

- 1.** Line a baking sheet with a silicone baking mat.
- 2.** In a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar over medium heat; cook, stirring constantly, until sugar liquefies. Continue stirring, and cook until it turns golden brown and no sugar crystals remain. Add 1 tablespoon (15 grams) bourbon. Mixture may seize, but keep stirring until it relaxes and smooths out. Pour onto prepared pan; using a spatula, spread to ⅛-inch thickness. Let cool and harden. Chop into chocolate chip-size pieces. Set aside.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until well combined, about 4 minutes. Add molasses, beating until no streaks remain. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in remaining 2 tablespoons (30 grams) bourbon.

5. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, ginger, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda, sea salt, allspice, cloves, cardamom, and nutmeg. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until mostly combined but with streaks of flour remaining. Add burnt sugar, and beat until evenly distributed throughout dough, about 1 minute.

6. Place remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar in a shallow bowl. Using a 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls (about 36 grams each). Roll balls thickly in sugar, and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans.

7. Bake for 12 to 13 minutes. Using the edge of a spatula, nudge any misshapen cookies back into shape. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Bourbon Buttercream onto cooled cookies. Sprinkle with demerara sugar, if desired.

BOURBON BUTTERCREAM

Makes about $\frac{1}{2}$ cups

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 2½ cups (300 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted and divided
 1 tablespoon (15 grams) milk
 1 tablespoon (15 grams) bourbon
 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter on medium speed until creamy, about 2 minutes. Add 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar, beating on low speed until combined. Add milk, beating until combined. Add another 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar, beating until combined, then beat in bourbon. Add vanilla and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until smooth, light, and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Use immediately.

GINGERBREAD CRINKLE SANDWICH COOKIES

Makes 15 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Mike Johnson

Perfectly soft, tender, and chewy, these sugar-coated gingerbread crinkle cookies are sandwiched with a creamy Vanilla Bean Cream Cheese Frosting that's so good you'll want to eat it straight from the bowl. These are likely to become your new holiday cookie baking tradition.

2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (147 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon
 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (170 grams) unsulphured molasses
 2 tablespoons (30 grams) milk
 Granulated sugar, for rolling
 Confectioners' sugar, for rolling
 Vanilla Bean Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, stir together flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, salt, baking soda, and cloves until combined. Using a fork or your fingers, cut in cold butter until small pea-size crumbs remain and mixture resembles the texture of sand.

2. With mixer on low speed, gradually add molasses and milk, beating until dough is evenly moistened. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until thoroughly combined. (The dough will appear slightly crumbly.) Turn out dough onto a work surface, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, 1 to 2 hours or overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls. (Do not overwork dough as it will get too warm.) Roll each ball in granulated sugar until coated. Roll each ball in confectioners' sugar until coated. Place $\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until centers are set, 10 to 12 minutes.

Let cool on pans for 2 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

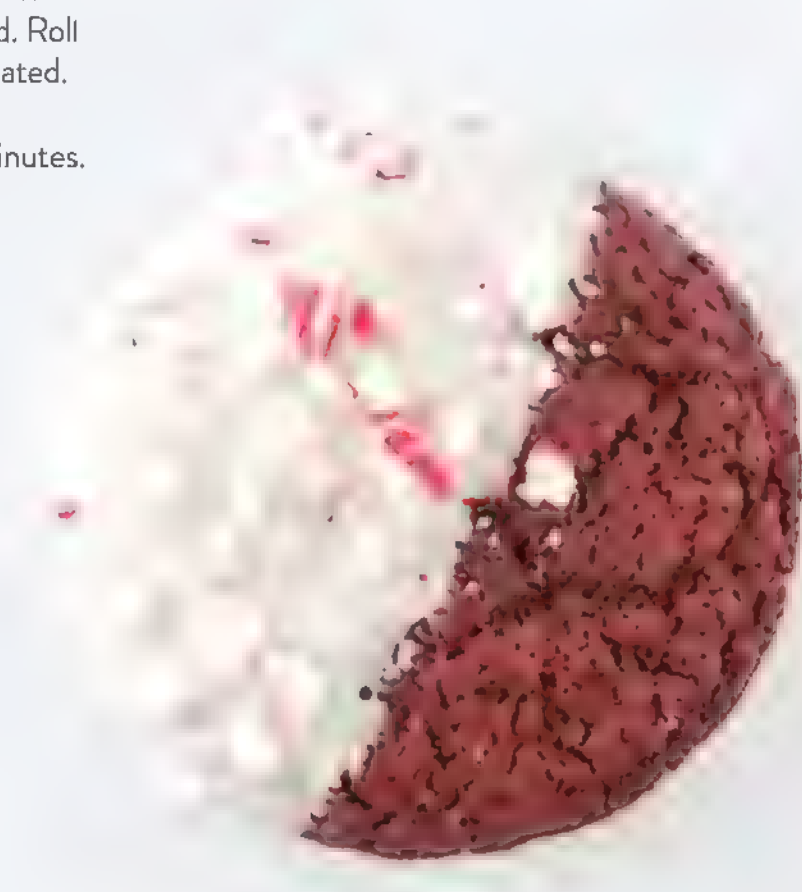
6. Pipe or spread Vanilla Bean Cream Cheese Frosting onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of frosting. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

VANILLA BEAN CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 2 cups

4 ounces (115 grams) cream cheese, room temperature
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
 1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese and butter at high speed until smooth and creamy. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla bean paste, and beat at low speed for 30 seconds. Increase mixer speed to high, and beat for 2 minutes. Cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days, or freeze for up to 3 months. After freezing, thaw in refrigerator, and beat for a few seconds so it's creamy again.



GINGERBREAD CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

Makes 22 cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

Nothing says the holidays more than spiced bakes, and very few recipes will win me over more than a soft gingerbread cookie. Add chocolate to that cookie, and there'll be nothing else I want to eat this winter! Because the cookie uses both muscovado sugar and molasses, there is already a hint of bitterness in the recipe, so when choosing your chocolate, you can go a little lower in cacao content than you might usually; even a milk chocolate would work wonderfully here.

- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light muscovado sugar**
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- ½ cup (170 grams) unsulphured molasses**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)**
- 4 cups plus 3 tablespoons (524 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 tablespoons (12 grams) grated fresh ginger**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking soda**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon grated fresh nutmeg**
- 10.5 ounces (315 grams) 60% cacao dark chocolate, roughly chopped**
- ½ cup (100 grams) demerara sugar**

- 1.** In a large saucepan, heat muscovado sugar, butter, and molasses over medium-high heat until butter is melted and sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat; let cool for 30 minutes. Once cool, add eggs, whisking until well combined.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together flour, fresh ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, ground ginger, salt, and nutmeg. Add sugar mixture, and stir with a wooden spoon until almost fully combined. Add chocolate, and stir until a uniform dough forms. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 2 hours.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4.** Using a ¼-cup spring-loaded scoop, scoop chilled dough, and roll into balls. Coat dough balls in demerara sugar. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

- 5.** Bake until set and lightly browned around the edges but still soft in the middle, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PRO TIP

For more melty chocolate on top of your cookies, press a few pieces of chopped chocolate onto the exterior of each dough ball right before popping them in the oven.

HAZELNUT, FIG, AND WHITE CHOCOLATE OATMEAL COOKIES

Makes 16 cookies

Recipe by Jenn Davis

These classic oatmeal cookies have a seasonal twist with hazelnuts, sweet black Mission figs, and white chocolate chips. Dark brown sugar and cinnamon add a hint of cozy caramel spice. The easy stir-and-drop cookie dough is perfect for those cold winter evenings when all you want to do is snuggle under a blanket.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)**
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) cornstarch**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- 3 cups (240 grams) old-fashioned oats**
- ¾ cup (75 grams) chopped hazelnuts**
- ½ cup (64 grams) chopped dried black Mission figs**
- 1½ cups (255 grams) white chocolate chips, divided**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes. Beat in vanilla. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Scrape bottom and sides of bowl as needed with a rubber spatula.

- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, cornstarch, cinnamon, and salt. Stir in oats. With mixer on medium-low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough is formed. Using a small spatula, scrape dough from paddle. Using a spoon, stir in hazelnuts, figs, and ½ cup (85 grams) white chocolate. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

- 3.** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4.** Using 2-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. If dough is very cold and firm, flatten cookie balls slightly.
- 5.** Bake for 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
- 6.** In the top of a double boiler, melt remaining 1 cup (170 grams) white chocolate over simmering water until melted and smooth. (Alternatively, in a large microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until white chocolate is melted and smooth.) Transfer melted white chocolate to a bowl for dipping. Dip each cookie halfway into melted white chocolate, and place on a sheet of parchment paper. Let stand until cool and firm, about 6 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks. (Place a small sheet of parchment or wax paper between each cookie to prevent sticking.) Or freeze cookies individually wrapped in plastic wrap in an airtight freezer-safe container for 2 to 3 months.

PRO TIP

Cookie dough can be made the day before and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Let dough warm to room temperature before baking to make sure cookies spread while baking. Super cold and firm dough won't spread as much.

PEPPERMINT BARK COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

A holiday twist on a classic chocolate chunk cookie inspired by peppermint bark. No rolling or cookie-cutting required! Just a simple drop and bake featuring dark chocolate, white chocolate, and peppermint candy canes. This dough freezes well, so you can have cookie dough on hand at all times in case an unexpected guest arrives. Be sure to use quality chopped chocolate over chocolate chips! The chunks make for the best gooey chocolate cookie.

- 1½ cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**

- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) peppermint extract**
- 3½ cups (438 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) fine sea salt**
- 4 ounces (115 grams) white chocolate, roughly chopped**
- 4 ounces (115 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, roughly chopped**
- 4 medium peppermint candy canes (48 grams), crushed**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat brown sugar, melted butter, and granulated sugar at low speed until

combined, about 1 minute. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts

3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, and sea salt. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until dough comes together. Fold in white chocolate, dark chocolate, and candy canes. Wrap dough in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop 24 dough balls, and place on prepared pans.

5. Bake until edges are golden brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool completely on wire racks. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days, or freeze for up to 2 weeks.





Stamped Lebkuchen
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Sugar & Spice Cookies

WHETHER YOU GO FOR CLASSIC LEBKUCHEN OR OUR CHAI-SPICED CRESCENTS, THESE SOUL-WARMING BITES ARE SURE TO FILL YOUR HOME WITH YULETIDE COMFORT

Orange Currant
Oatmeal Cookies
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- Spiced Sugar Sandwich Cookies
with Five-Spice Cranberry Swiss Buttercream
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Orange Currant
Oatmeal Cookies
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Vanilla Sugar Cookie Trees with
Cream Cheese Frosting
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CHAI CRESCENT COOKIES

Makes about 23 cookies

Recipe by Laura Crandall

Spice up your holidays with these chai-packed crescent cookies. This buttery, crumbly dough is flecked with a homemade chai blend and rolled in chai sugar after baking for an extra dose of warmth.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon, divided**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger, divided**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cloves, divided**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cardamom, divided**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, 1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ginger, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cloves, salt, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cardamom, and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough forms.
4. Using a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough into balls (about 25 grams). Roll each dough ball into a $4\frac{3}{4}$ -inch log with tapered ends, and bend into a crescent shape, flouring surface as needed. Place about 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
5. In a medium bowl, stir together granulated sugar, remaining 1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon, remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ginger, remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cloves, remaining $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cardamom, and remaining $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper.
6. Bake, one batch at a time, until edges are just beginning to turn golden (not browned),

12 to 15 minutes. Sprinkle spiced sugar onto hot cookies. Let cool completely; dust with spiced sugar again. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 weeks.

CARDAMOM ESPRESSO COOKIES WITH VANILLA GLAZE

Makes about 22 cookies

Recipe by Jenn Davis

These rich spiced cookies have a hint of coffee and espresso. They are for the holiday cookie lover who doesn't like or have time to decorate with frosting. Use any holiday cookie stamp to add a little festive flare.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (40 grams) confectioners' sugar**
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
 - 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
 - 3 cups (391 grams) all-purpose flour**
 - 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons (10 grams) instant espresso powder**
 - 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon**
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cardamom**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) sea salt**
- Vanilla Glaze (recipe follows)**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until smooth. Beat in vanilla. Scrape bottom and sides of bowl as needed with a rubber spatula.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, espresso powder, cinnamon, cardamom, and sea salt. With mixer on medium-low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough is formed. Shape dough into a ball, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Divide dough in half. Wrap one half in plastic wrap, and return to refrigerator. Roll dough into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch balls (about 40 grams); place 4 inches apart on prepared pan. Dip a reindeer cookie stamp* in flour to coat design; tap out any excess flour. Pressing slowly but firmly, stamp cookie dough ball down with cookie stamp, slightly rotating wrist to make sure entire design

is pressed. Gently peel cookie dough away from stamp. Coat stamp in flour between each cookie to prevent sticking. Using a $2\frac{5}{8}$ -inch round cutter or sharp knife, remove excess trimmings. Place on prepared pans.

5. Bake until edges start to look golden, 11 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.
6. Using a small pastry brush, gently paint Vanilla Glaze onto cooled cookies. Let stand until firm, 10 to 15 minutes. Store in an airtight container for 3 to 4 weeks. (Place a small sheet of parchment or wax paper between each glazed cookie to prevent sticking.) Or freeze cookies individually wrapped in plastic wrap in an airtight freezer-safe container for 3 to 4 months

**We used Nordic Ware Yuletide Cookie Stamp's reindeer stamp, available at nordicware.com.*

PRO TIP

This dough can be made the day before, wrapped in plastic wrap, and stored in the refrigerator. Let dough warm very slightly at room temperature, enough to roll out dough before stamping and cutting. If dough becomes too soft, place back in refrigerator for 10 to 15 minutes to firm. Refrigerate baking sheet with cutout cookies for 10 minutes before baking. This helps them keep their shape.

VANILLA GLAZE

Makes about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

- 1 cup (170 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (21 grams) light corn syrup**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Use immediately.

ORANGE CURRANT OATMEAL COOKIES

Makes 30 to 36 cookies

Recipe by Becky Sue Wilberding

Inspired by the nostalgic iced oatmeal cookies we all knew and loved as kids, these cardamom- and cinnamon-spiced cookies are loaded with texture and flavor. Extra-thick old-fashioned oats are whizzed in the food processor for an ultra chewy bite and then studded with tart currants and bright orange zest. The soft and chewy oatmeal cookies are finished with a creamy, subtly sweet orange glaze to balance out the spicy flavors.

- 2 cups (200 grams) extra-thick old-fashioned oats***
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1½ tablespoons (9 grams) orange zest**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) fine sea salt**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cardamom**
- ¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon**
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (220 grams) lightly packed light brown sugar**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1½ cups (192 grams) dried currants**
- Orange Icing (recipe follows)**

1. Preheat oven at 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or nonstick baking mats.

2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse oats until coarsely chopped, 10 to 20 seconds. Transfer to a large bowl; add flour, orange zest, sea salt, baking soda, cardamom, baking powder, and cinnamon, whisking to combine. Set aside

3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. In a liquid measuring cup, whisk together eggs and vanilla until combined. With mixer on low speed, gradually add egg mixture.

4. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture in two to three additions, beating until well combined. Stir in currants just until incorporated. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and shape into balls (31 grams). Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Refrigerate overnight. (See Note.)

5. Bake until edges begin to brown and centers appear slightly underdone, 10 to 12 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool on pans. (They will continue to cook and should be crunchy around the edges with a warm and chewy center.) Drizzle Orange Icing onto cooled cookies, and gently spread just to edges. Alternatively, dip top of cookies in Orange Icing. Let icing set before serving

**I used Bob's Red Mill Extra Thick Rolled Oats.*

Note: You can also bake these cookies immediately (without chilling dough), but your cookies will not be as thick

PRO TIP

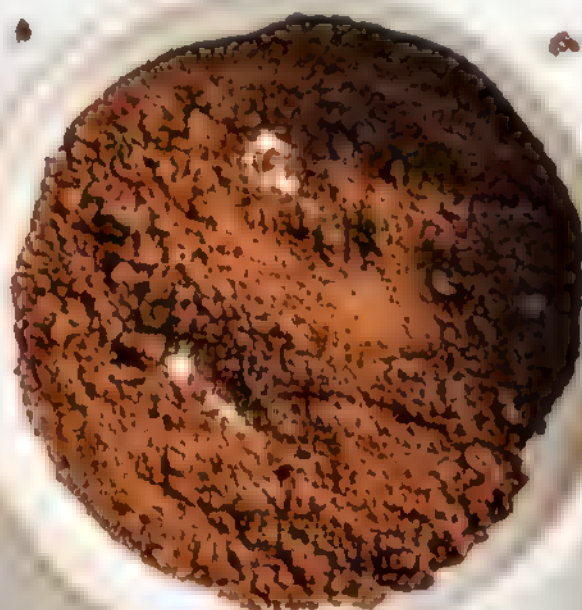
Once scooped, this dough can be refrigerated overnight or sealed in a resealable plastic bag and frozen for up to 2 months. Bake them straight from freezer. Baking time may require an extra minute or so.

ORANGE ICING

Makes about ¾ cup

- 2¼ cups (270 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh orange juice**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and orange juice until smooth and creamy. The glaze should run off whisk in a smooth ribbon. If it's too thick, add a bit more orange juice, ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) at a time. If it's too thin, add 1 tablespoon (7 grams) confectioners' sugar at a time until right consistency is reached





VANILLA SUGAR COOKIE TREES WITH CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 24 cookies

Recipe by Becky Sue Wilberding

These easy vanilla shortbread cookies get dressed in their holiday best with a festive flourish of Cream Cheese Frosting mini stars in wintergreen hues. They may take a while to decorate, but the gorgeous result is worth the investment. Just turn on a holiday movie or two while you decorate, and enjoy the cozy craft.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (292 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) fine sea salt**
- Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)**
- Green and blue natural food coloring**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and reserved vanilla seeds at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 5 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium-low speed, add vanilla, beating to combine.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and sea salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until incorporated. Turn out dough onto a floured surface, and divide in half. Shape each half into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

3. Let dough stand at room temperature until slightly softened, about 5 minutes. Roll dough to about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Using a 3- to 4-inch tree-shaped cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Line baking sheets with parchment paper, and place cookies 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Freeze or refrigerate for at least 1 to 2 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

5. Bake until cookies just start to turn golden brown around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans or wire racks.

6. Divide Cream Cheese Frosting among 3 small bowls. For light green color, add 1 drop of green food coloring to first bowl, and stir until combined. For medium green color, add 3 drops green food coloring to second bowl. Stir until combined. For minty blue color, add 3 drops green food coloring and 1 drop blue coloring the third bowl. Stir until combined.

7. Place one-third of each frosting in a piping bag fitted with a small open star tip (Wilton No. 16 or No. 18). Refrigerate in piping bags for at least 20 minutes. (Cover remaining frosting in bowls with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until ready to use.)

8. To decorate cookies, hold frosting bag straight up, with tip just slightly above surface. Squeeze bag, and use light pressure to form a small star; add more pressure to make a bigger star. Stop squeezing before pulling tip away. Using one color at a time, cover cookie with stars; fill in with other colors. Repeat with remaining cookies and remaining frosting. (If frosting gets too warm, the stars will not hold their shape. You may need to place the piping bags in the refrigerator for a few minutes to chill the frosting a few times throughout the decorating process.)

9. Alternatively, smear thick swirls of frosting on each cookie with an offset spatula.
10. Store decorated cookies in refrigerator. Remove from refrigerator 1 to 2 hours before serving.

PRO TIP

Be sure to fully beat the sugar and butter. You want it super light and fluffy. This will help the cookies keep sharp edges when baking. Freeze the cut cookies and bake from frozen for best results.

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 2½ cups

- 1 cup (225 grams) cream cheese, softened
- 6 tablespoons (84 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 3½ cups (420 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese, butter, and vanilla at medium speed, 1 to 2 minutes, until smooth. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until thick and creamy. Use immediately.

SPICED SUGAR SANDWICH COOKIES WITH FIVE-SPICE CRANBERRY SWISS BUTTERCREAM

Makes 38 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Rebecca Firth

Picture your favorite sugar cookie recipe and then add your favorite holiday spices. That's what this cookie tastes like. It's great on its own but even better with a thick smear of Five-Spice Cranberry Swiss Buttercream. The buttercream is lightly scented with cranberries and five-spice.

- 1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- ¾ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon

- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
- 2½ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 cups (254 grams) bread flour
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) sea salt
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda

Five-Spice Cranberry Swiss Buttercream (recipe follows)

- 1 cup (16 grams) freeze-dried cranberries, finely ground (optional)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until creamy, about 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla, cinnamon, allspice, ginger, cardamom, and cloves, and beat until well combined, about 1 minute.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together flours, sea salt, baking powder, and baking soda. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed just until combined. Divide dough in half, and shape each half into a disk. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour. (Don't chill longer than 1 hour, or it will be too difficult to roll out. If this happens, let the dough come close to room temperature before attempting to roll out. You want it soft enough so it rolls out without cracking but cool enough that it's not too sticky.)

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Let dough stand until slightly softened, about 10 minutes. Between 2 lightly floured sheets of parchment paper, roll half of dough to ¼-inch thickness. (Don't go too thin. Periodically check to make sure the dough isn't sticking, and sprinkle lightly with flour when it does.) Using a 1½-inch fluted round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining dough. Freeze for 15 minutes, or refrigerate for 30 minutes.

5. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Five-Spice Cranberry Swiss Buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies; sprinkle with freeze-dried cranberries (if using). Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream.

FIVE-SPICE CRANBERRY SWISS BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 2 cups

- 1 cup (170 grams) fresh or frozen cranberries
- ¾ cup (133 grams) plus ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup (120 grams) water
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) Chinese five-spice powder, divided
- 3 large egg whites (90 grams)
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, slightly chilled and cubed

1. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, bring cranberries, ½ cup (100 grams) sugar, ½ cup (120 grams) water, and 1 teaspoon (2 grams) five-spice powder to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat, and simmer, stirring frequently, until mixture is reduced and thickened, about 20 minutes. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve, reserving 3 to 4 tablespoons (57 to 72 grams) cranberry liquid and discarding solids. Let cool completely.

2. Place egg whites, sea salt, and remaining ¾ cup (133 grams) sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer; place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Cook, whisking constantly, until mixture is thick and opaque and no longer feels gritty when rubbed between two fingers, 3 to 4 minutes. Return bowl to stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, and beat at high speed until stiff peaks form. Switch to the paddle attachment. With mixer on medium speed, add butter, a few cubes at a time, beating until well combined after each addition. (If mixture curdles, your butter may be too cold. If mixture is soupy, you may need to refrigerate it.) Beat until mixture is smooth, glossy, and voluminous. Add reserved 3 to 4 tablespoons (57 to 72 grams) cranberry liquid and remaining ½ teaspoon (1 gram) five-spice powder. Use immediately.



STAMPED LEBKUCHEN

Makes 18 to 20 cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

Lebkuchen are a European Christmas staple. They hail from Germany but can now be found all across Europe at Christmas markets all winter long. They are deeply spiced and chewy cookies, a relative of gingerbread, but they differ partly in their use of honey. My version isn't strictly authentic but is more of an homage to the classic. To give it a little extra Christmas cheer, I used cookie stamps to emboss the cookies with a variety of patterns.

- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- ¾ tablespoons (75 grams) honey**
- ¾ tablespoons (75 grams) molasses**
- 1 large egg (50 grams)**
- 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon**
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda**
- ¼ teaspoon grated fresh nutmeg**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- Granulated sugar, for sprinkling**
- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) fresh lemon juice**

- 1.** In a large saucepan, heat brown sugar, honey, and molasses over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat; let cool for 20 minutes. Once cooled, add egg, whisking until well combined.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, cinnamon, ginger, baking powder, baking soda, nutmeg, cloves, and pepper. Make a well in center of flour mixture; add sugar mixture, and stir with a wooden spoon until combined. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface, and knead until a stiff dough forms. Divide dough in half and wrap each half in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours.
- 3.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4.** On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2¾-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Sprinkle with granulated sugar. Using a cookie stamp*, emboss a pattern onto each cookie. Repeat with remaining dough.

- 5.** Bake until lightly browned around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes.

- 6.** In a small bowl, stir together confectioners' sugar and lemon juice until a thick but pourable glaze is formed. Using a pastry brush, coat top of warm cookies with glaze. (Doing this whilst the cookies are still warm will give these cookies their characteristic translucent glaze.) Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week. As with most gingerbread recipes, the flavour and texture will improve after a day's rest.

**I used Nordic Ware Starry Night Cookie Stamp Set and Nordic Ware Greetings Heirloom Cookie Stamps, available at nordicware.com.*

CINNAMON SWIRL COOKIES WITH MAPLE BUTTER FROSTING

Makes 40 to 45 cookies

Recipe by Tessa Huff

These cinnamon roll-inspired cookies are packed with spice and draped with Maple Butter Frosting. The maple pays tribute to my adoptive country of Canada and pairs perfectly with the ground cinnamon.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams)**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2½ cups (333 grams) plus ¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour, divided**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda**
- 2 tablespoons (12 grams) ground cinnamon**
- ¼ cup (85 grams) maple syrup**
- Maple Butter Frosting (recipe follows)**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add sugar, and beat for 2 to 3 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add egg and vanilla. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until combined, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides and bottom of bowl.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, sift together 2½ cups (333 grams) flour, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in two additions, beating until dough comes together in a loose, shaggy ball.
- 3.** Divide dough in half, and turn out onto 2 sheets of parchment paper or nonstick baking mats. Roll each half of dough into an 11-inch square, about

¼ inch thick. (Lightly dust with flour if dough becomes sticky while rolling.) Place dough on baking sheets, and refrigerate for 8 to 10 minutes (Do not chill the dough for too long, or it may crack when rolled.)

- 4.** In a small bowl, stir together cinnamon and remaining ¼ cup (31 grams) flour. Stir in maple syrup to create a thin paste.
- 5.** Leaving a ¼-inch border, spread each portion of dough with maple-cinnamon filling. Tightly roll up each portion of dough into a log. Wrap logs in parchment paper, and refrigerate until firm enough to slice, at least 2 hours.
- 6.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 7.** Using a sharp knife, cut logs into ¼- to ½-inch-thick slices. Place 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
- 8.** Bake until very lightly browned around the edges, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool completely on pans. Spread Maple Butter Frosting onto cooled cookies. Serve immediately, or store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

MAPLE BUTTER FROSTING

Makes about ¾ cup

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1¼ to 1½ cups (150 to 180 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- ½ cup (105 grams) maple butter***
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

- 1.** In a medium bowl, stir unsalted butter with a small rubber spatula or spoon until smooth. Add 1¼ cups (150 grams) confectioners' sugar, maple butter, cream, and salt, and stir until smooth and creamy. Add remaining ¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar, stirring until frosting reaches a spreadable consistency, if needed. Use immediately.

**Available in specialty food stores or online.*

PRO TIP

If making in advance, store unfrosted cookies in an airtight container for up to 4 days.





Cut & Iced Cookies

BAKE UP A WINTER WONDERLAND WITH THESE SNOWFLAKE-SHAPED
LINZERS, ICED WREATHS, COZY SUGAR COOKIE MITTENS, AND MORE
DECKED-OUT COOKIES







Browned Butter Snickerdoodle
Cookies
page 96





cover recipe



SUGAR COOKIE WREATHS

Makes about 36 cookies

Recipe by Laura Crandall

Is it really the holidays if you don't have festive sugar cookies? These classic cookies are topped with an elegant Royal Icing wreath that's easier to create than you might think. Follow our step-by-step decorating guide on page 20 and you'll be decking the halls with these jolly cookies in no time.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**
- 3¼ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- Royal Icing (recipe follows)**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and confectioners' sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and extracts, beating until combined.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough forms.
- 4.** Divide dough in half; cover one half with plastic wrap. On a heavily floured surface, roll remaining dough to ¼-inch thickness. (Lightly flour top of dough if it sticks to rolling pin.) Using a 3¼-inch fluted round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Using a 1¼-inch fluted round cutter, cut centers from cookies. Repeat with remaining dough. Using a small offset spatula, place cookies at least 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
- 5.** Bake, one batch at a time, until lightly browned, 7 to 8 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Using a large offset or flat metal spatula, transfer

- cookies to a wire rack, and let cool completely.
- 6.** Using piping bag with plain white Royal Icing, pipe an outline along both edges of each cookie. Let dry for 5 minutes. Fill in center using white Royal Icing in squeeze bottle. Immediately pipe small green dots to left and right of center of ring using small piping bottle. Using a wooden pick, continuously drag through center of cookie to create leaves. (See page 18 for a step-by-step decorating tutorial.) Let dry for 2 to 3 hours.
 - 7.** Using piping bag, pipe red Royal Icing berries in groupings around cookie. Let dry until hardened, about 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

ROYAL ICING

Makes about 6 cups

- 1 (2-pound) package (907 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 5 tablespoons (50 grams) meringue powder**
- ¾ cup (180 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C)**
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract**
- Gel food coloring (juniper green, kelly green, Christmas red, black, yellow)**
- Water, as needed**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat confectioners' sugar and meringue powder at low speed until combined. Slowly add ¾ cup (180 grams) warm water and vanilla, beating until fluid. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until stiff, about 5 minutes.
- 2.** Place 1 cup (180 grams) white icing in a piping bag fitted with a small round piping tip (Wilton No. 3). In a medium bowl, place another 1 cup (180 grams) white icing. Slowly add green food

colorings until desired color is reached. Add water, 1 teaspoon (5 grams) at a time, until flood consistency is reached (about 3 teaspoons [15 grams] total). Place green icing in a small piping bottle fitted with a small round tip (Wilton No. 4). In another medium bowl, place another 1 cup (180 grams) white icing. Slowly add red food coloring until desired color is reached. (Adding a touch of black and yellow will keep it from going pink.) Place in a piping bag fitted with a small round tip (Wilton No. 2), or trim end of bag to create a small opening. Place remaining white icing in a large bowl. Add water, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, until fluid (5 to 7 tablespoons [75 to 105 grams] total.) (It should ribbon when a whisk is pulled up out of icing.) Place in squeeze bottle with a small opening

PEANUT BUTTER EGGNOG SNOWFLAKE COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Jenn Davis

These soft peanut butter snowflake cookies decorated with piped Eggnog Buttercream deliver melt-in-your-mouth cookie goodness that screams wintertime is here. Use a little buttercream, or frost the whole cookie. Either way, the flavor combo is just what a snow-loving sweet tooth craving needs.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 1 cup (256 grams) creamy peanut butter**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 3 large eggs (150 grams)**
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) ground nutmeg**
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- Eggnog Buttercream (recipe follows)**
- Garnish: sparkling sugar**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add peanut butter, beating until smooth. Beat in vanilla. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a dough is formed. Divide dough in half, and shape into disks; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Place half of dough on a large sheet of parchment paper. Cover with another large sheet of parchment paper, and roll to ¼-inch thickness. Remove top sheet of parchment. Using a 3- to 5-inch snowflake cutter dipped in flour, cut dough, re-flouring cutter every 3 to 4 cookies to prevent sticking. Using a small offset spatula lightly coated in flour, transfer cookies to prepared pans. Refrigerate until firm, about 15 minutes.

5. Bake until edges start to lightly brown, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.

6. Place Eggnog Buttercream in a piping bag fitted with a closed star piping tip (Wilton No. 18 or No. 31). Pipe stars onto cooled cookies by gently squeezing from top of bag and then lifting while releasing pressure. Sprinkle with sparkling sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container, separated by parchment or wax paper, for up to 3 weeks, or individually wrap cookies in plastic wrap, and freeze in an airtight freezer-safe container for 3 to 4 months.

PRO TIP

Cookie dough can be made the day before and stored wrapped in plastic wrap in the refrigerator. Let dough warm slightly at room temperature to roll out but maintain a cold cookie dough.

EGGNOG BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 3 cups

- 1** cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼** cup (60 grams) prepared eggnog
- 1** tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- ½** teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 4 to 5 cups** (480 to 600 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat butter, eggnog, vanilla, and salt at medium-low speed until combined. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until desired thickness is reached. Use immediately.

SNOWFLAKE LINZER COOKIES

Makes 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

Linzer cookies are popular Austrian cookies made by many during the holiday season. Almond flour, citrus zest, and a touch of cinnamon and star anise make these wintry, warm, and delicious. Make them even more special by using homemade jam.

- 1** cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾** cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 1** tablespoon (3 grams) orange zest
- 1** large egg (50 grams)
- 1** tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½** cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¾** cup (64 grams) almond flour
- 1** teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1** teaspoon (2 grams) ground star anise
- ½** teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½** teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1** cup (320 grams) raspberry jam
- Garnish:** confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and zest at medium-high speed until pale

and fluffy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, cinnamon, star anise, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Using floured hands, divide dough in half. Shape each half into a 5-inch disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, at least 2 hours.

3. Position oven racks in upper and lower thirds of oven, and preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

4. On a lightly floured surface, place half of dough; sprinkle top with more flour. Roll dough into an 11-inch circle, ⅛ inch thick. (If dough becomes too soft to roll, rewrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm.) Using a 3-inch snowflake cutter, cut dough, and place about 1 inch apart on 2 large ungreased baking sheets. Using a 1-inch mini snowflake cutter, cut centers from half of cookies. Reserve centers, and reroll with scraps once.

5. Bake until edges are golden, 10 to 15 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Using a metal spatula, remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.

6. Spread about 1 teaspoon (7 grams) jam onto flat side of all solid cookies. Dust cookies with cutouts with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Place cookies with cutouts, flat side down, on top of jam.



MITTEN COOKIES

Makes 10 to 12 (3½-inch) cookies

Recipe by Tessa Huff

Swapping honey in for molasses and changing up the spice blend from a typical gingerbread cookie creates a brighter flavor palette in these cookies, and the lemony icing pairs well with the punchy cardamom and other spices.

1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ tablespoons (12 grams) cornstarch
¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground cardamom
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
¼ teaspoon grated fresh nutmeg
½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
3 tablespoons (63 grams) honey
1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
Lemon Royal Icing (recipe follows)
Gel food coloring (optional)

1. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, cornstarch, cardamom, salt, cinnamon, baking powder, and nutmeg.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Add sugar, and beat for 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides

of bowl. Reduce mixer speed to low. Add honey and egg yolk, and beat until combined.

3. With the mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until dough comes together. Turn out dough onto a piece of plastic wrap, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 3½-inch mitten cutter, cut dough, and place 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared pan, rerolling scraps as necessary. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

6. Bake until edges begin to brown, 12 to 14 minutes. Let cool completely on pan.

7. Tint Lemon Royal Icing the color of your choice (if using). For woven design, thin a portion of Lemon Royal Icing with water until it is the consistency of runny honey to create a glaze. Using an offset spatula, spread a thin coat of glaze around top of cookie, leaving about ⅛-inch border un-iced. This prevents any cookie from showing through the piped icing. Place stiff Lemon Royal Icing in a piping bag fitted with a small petal tip (Wilton No. 101). Pipe interlocking “V” shapes in rows on cookies. Point narrow end of petal tip away from your body and toward top of cookie as you pipe down length of cookie. Turn cookie opposite way to create rows of alternating woven pattern. Alternatively, use the same technique

using a small round tip (Wilton No. 5).

8. For spiraled knit design, place Lemon Royal Icing in a piping bag fitted with a small star piping tip. Starting at top of cookie, pipe tight spirals down length of cookie. Repeat at top to create rows of icing until cookie is completely decorated. (See page 19 for a step-by-step icing tutorial.)

9. For mitten cuff design, thin a portion of Lemon Royal Icing with water until it is the consistency of runny honey to create a glaze. Place glaze in a shallow bowl, and dip top surface of cookie into glaze. Shake off excess, and let dry. Pipe remaining stiff icing onto cuff of mitten using one of the techniques above. Let icing completely dry and harden before carefully storing cookies in an airtight container. Cookies are best served within 2 to 3 days.

LEMON ROYAL ICING

Makes about 1¼ cups

2½ cups (320 grams) confectioners' sugar
2 tablespoons (20 grams) meringue powder
3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 grams) water
1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh lemon juice

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, stir together confectioners' sugar and meringue powder. Add 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water and lemon juice, and beat at medium speed until stiff peaks form, 6 to 7 minutes. Add remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, beating until consistency is slightly thicker than toothpaste and easy to pipe. Use immediately. Cover any icing not being used with a damp cloth.

CHOCOLATE CARDAMOM SUGAR COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

Cardamom is one of my absolute favourites. I love its unique taste and the beautiful warmth it gives to sugar cookies. I kept these particular cookies soft by adding cream cheese to the dough—it also gives them a slight tang that works so well with the cardamom and chocolate. I finished them off with a generous dusting of confectioners' sugar using a snowflake stencil.

1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (140 grams) full-fat cream cheese, softened
¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (55 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar



- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 cups plus 1 tablespoon (383 grams) all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 cup (85 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- 1½ teaspoons (2.5 grams) ground cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- Garnish: confectioners' sugar**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and cream cheese at medium speed until combined, 1 to 2 minutes. Add granulated sugar and brown sugar; increase mixer speed to high, and beat until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce mixer speed to low. Add egg, egg yolk, and vanilla, beating until combined.

2. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cocoa, cardamom, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture all at once, and beat at low speed just until combined. Using a rubber spatula, briefly stir to ensure everything is incorporated. (Dough will be sticky.) Transfer dough to a large piece of plastic wrap, and press into a rough rectangle. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, 3 to 4 hours or overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Divide dough in half; return half of dough to refrigerator. On a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper, roll remaining dough to ⅓-inch thickness. (You may need to give dough a few bangs with rolling pin to help flatten it a little before you start rolling. This dough is on the stickier side, so rolling it out on a sheet of parchment paper means you can easily transfer it back to the refrigerator to chill a little if needed.) Using a 3-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place on prepared pans. (If at any time dough becomes too warm and hard to work with, return to refrigerator to chill briefly.) Refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes.

5. Bake, one batch at a time, for 9 to 10 minutes. (Cookies will still look very soft when they come out of the oven but will firm up as they cool.) Let cool completely on pans. Place a stencil* on top of cooled cookies, and dust with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**Make your own stencil with a snowflake paper punch, available online or in local craft stores. A piece of lace draped on top of the cookies also works well.*

PRO TIP

To help keep them moist, these cookies don't have any leaven in them, so the thickness that you roll the dough out to will be the thickness of your finished cookie.

BROWNEO BUTTER SNICKERDOODLE COOKIES

Makes 20 to 24 cookies

Recipe by Elisabeth Farris

The classic flavor of snickerdoodles with a unique twist! Browned butter is the perfect addition to these festive cookies, giving them the most delicious nutty flavor. Use your favorite holiday cookie cutters to make different shapes and designs, and they will be the hit of any party!

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon, divided
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- Glaze (recipe follows)**
- Gel food coloring, for decorating**
- Small food-safe paintbrush**
- Clear vodka, for decorating**

1. In a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Cook until butter turns a medium amber color and has a nutty aroma, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool to room temperature. Pour browned butter into a glass measuring cup, and freeze just until solidified, about 1 hour.

2. In the bowl of stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat browned butter and 1 cup (200 grams) sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs and vanilla, and beat until combined.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, 1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until dough comes together. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a disk. Wrap disk in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

5. In a small bowl, stir together remaining 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar and remaining 1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon. Set aside.

6. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 3½-inch holiday cookie cutter (use any shape you like or multiple shapes), cut dough, rerolling scraps as needed. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar.

7. Bake until lightly golden around the edges, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool completely on wire racks.

8. Place Glaze in a piping bag, and cut off tip; outline each cookie with Glaze. After outline has set, fill it completely with Glaze, and use a wooden pick or knife to spread it out and fill in holes. Let glazed cookies stand at room temperature for at least 5 hours or overnight before decorating or painting.

9. Use a toothpick to place a few drops of gel food coloring on a sheet of wax paper or parchment paper. With a fine-tipped paintbrush, use vodka or clear extract to dilute the food coloring and paint* your design on the cookies. (See page 18 for a step-by-step tutorial.) After dipping your brush in the paint, lightly dab it on a paper towel so the colors don't become too wet and bleed. When changing colors, remember to rinse and dry your brush between each use. Store decorated cookies in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

**I used Wilton Cake Decorating Tools, 5-Piece Brush Set*

Note: *This dough can be wrapped in plastic wrap and frozen for up to 3 months. Place it in the refrigerator overnight to thaw out.*

GLAZE

Makes about 1½ cups

- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 4 to 6 tablespoons (60 to 90 grams) whole milk, room temperature

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth. When you run your whisk through the glaze, it should settle back down after 10 seconds. If glaze is too thick, add more milk, and if it's too thin, add more confectioners' sugar. Color glaze with food coloring as desired. If you're not going to use your glaze immediately, cover with a wet paper towel so it doesn't dry out.



Holiday Bars

SWIRLED WITH PEPPERMINT, PACKED WITH CHOCOLATE, AND SMOTHERED IN FROSTING, THESE FESTIVE BROWNIES, BLONDIES, AND BARS FEED BIG HOLIDAY APPETITES





Salted Hazelnut Chocolate
Maple Rum Bars
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Peppermint Cheesecake Swirl
Brownies
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Cinnamon Roll Blondies with
Cream Cheese Glaze
page 108







NO-BAKE PEPPERMINT SLICE

Makes 16 bars

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

This recipe is a nod to my favourite biscuit (cookie) from New Zealand, the mint slice. I've turned it into this No-Bake Peppermint Slice, which has a chocolate-graham cracker crust, a minty filling, and a smooth chocolate top. A little goes a long way with this, so it is perfect for making ahead to have on hand in the refrigerator for whenever you need a little treat!

- 1 (14.4-ounce) box (408 grams) graham crackers**
 - ½ cup (43 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
 - ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
 - ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
 - 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons (99 grams) unsweetened desiccated coconut***
 - 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (255 grams) unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled**
- Peppermint Filling (recipe follows)**
Chocolate Topping (recipe follows)

- 1.** Butter and flour a 9-inch square baking pan. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
- 2.** In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse together graham crackers, cocoa, sugar, and salt until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Transfer mixture to a medium bowl;

add coconut, stirring until combined. Add melted butter, and stir with a rubber spatula until incorporated. (Mixture should resemble wet sand.) Using a flat-bottomed glass or measuring cup, press mixture into bottom of prepared pan. Freeze for 20 minutes.

3. Top graham cracker layer with Peppermint Filling. Use a damp offset spatula to help smooth Peppermint Filling into an even layer. Slam pan on counter to level. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes.

4. Top with Chocolate Topping. Slam pan on counter several times to smooth and release any bubbles. Refrigerate until topping is set. Using a clean, sharp knife, cut into 16 (2¼-inch) squares, wiping blade between each cut. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**Desiccated coconut is unsweetened, very finely ground coconut with most of the moisture removed. If your local grocery store doesn't carry it, check specialty food stores or online*

PEPPERMINT TOPPING

Makes about 2 cups

- 4¾ cups (570 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted**
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1¼ teaspoons plus ⅛ teaspoon (5 grams) peppermint extract**
- ½ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons (45 to 60 grams) boiling water, divided**

1. Place confectioners' sugar, butter, peppermint extract, and vanilla bean paste in a medium bowl. Add 3 tablespoons (45 grams) boiling water, and stir until incorporated. (It should resemble a thick paste that smooths out within about 20 seconds when the bowl is left to stand.) Add remaining 1 tablespoon (15 grams) boiling water, 1 teaspoon (5 grams) at a time, if needed, to help get to correct consistency. Use immediately.

CHOCOLATE TOPPING

Makes about 1 cup

- 9 ounces (250 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) vegetable or canola oil**

1. In the top of a double boiler, combine chocolate and oil. Cook over simmering water, stirring frequently, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. (Alternatively, combine chocolate and butter in a medium microwave-safe bowl. Heat on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth.) Use immediately.

SALTED HAZELNUT CHOCOLATE MAPLE RUM BARS

Makes 16 bars

Recipe by Becky Sue Wilberding

Think pecan pie filling but with chocolate, hazelnuts, and significantly less work. These nutty bars are layered with a brown sugar shortbread cookie base and topped with smooth dark chocolate and a decadent maple, rum, and hazelnut filling. To finish, the bars are liberally sprinkled with crunchy sea salt flakes to perfectly balance out the indulgent flavors.

- 2 cups (266 grams) raw hazelnuts**
 - ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
 - ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
 - 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
 - 1¼ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour**
 - 1 teaspoon (3 grams) fine sea salt**
 - 1¼ cups (213 grams) dark chocolate chips**
- Maple Rum Filling (recipe follows)**
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) flaked sea salt**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
- 2.** Spread hazelnuts in an even layer on a baking sheet
- 3.** Bake until hazelnuts give off a nutty aroma and have browned slightly, 10 to 15 minutes. (The skins should start to blister.) Let cool slightly. Wrap nuts



No-Bake
Peppermint Slice

in a clean kitchen towel, and rub to remove loose skins. (Don't worry about skins that don't come off.) Let cool completely. Coarsely chop 1 cup (133 grams) of hazelnuts; leave remaining 1 cup (133 grams) hazelnuts whole.

4. Line a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper.

5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 5 to 7 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla

6. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and fine salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until incorporated. Lightly press dough into prepared pan.

7. Bake until edges are golden brown and top is firm to the touch, 22 to 24 minutes. Let cool completely.

8. Layer chocolate chips on top of prepared crust. Top with reserved chopped and whole hazelnuts. Carefully pour Maple Rum Filling over top.

9. Bake until filling is set, 18 to 20 minutes. Let set for at least 1 to 2 hours before cutting. Sprinkle with flaked salt.

MAPLE RUM FILLING

Makes about 1½ cups

- ½ cup (110 grams) lightly packed light brown sugar**
- ½ cup (170 grams) maple syrup**
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) spiced rum**
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature**

1. In a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook brown sugar and maple syrup over medium heat, whisking occasionally, until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat; add rum, butter, and vanilla. Let cool; add eggs, whisking until smooth. (Do not add the eggs while the syrup is hot, or they will begin to cook.) Use immediately.

PRO TIP

The spiced rum and sea salt really cut down the sweetness of these bars. Feel free to sub in bourbon or a coffee liqueur instead if rum isn't your jam.

COFFEE TOFFEE CHOCOLATE CHUNK COOKIE BARS

Makes 10 bars

Recipe by Tessa Huff

Simply cut into triangles like a tree instead of squares, these festive cookies are dressed up with coffee-infused ganache and sugar pearls. The caramelized toffee is perfectly balanced by the dark chocolate and coffee flavors while offering crunch to each bite. Complete the design by piping swags of ganache using a petal tip or swirl it on for a more rustic finish.

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
 - 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
 - ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
 - 1 large egg (50 grams)**
 - 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)**
 - 2 teaspoons (8 grams) pure vanilla extract**
 - 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour**
 - 2 teaspoons (4 grams) instant espresso powder (optional)**
 - ¾ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking soda**
 - ½ teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
 - 6 ounces (175 grams) 60% to 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**
 - ¾ cup (120 grams) toffee bits**
- Coffee Ganache Frosting (recipe follows)**
Garnish: sugar pearls, dragées

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter a 9-inch square baking pan. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter at medium speed until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Add sugars, and beat until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, egg yolk, and vanilla, beating until combined, about 1 minute.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, espresso powder (if using), baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in two additions, beating just until combined and a few streaks of flour remain. Fold in chocolate and toffee bits. Press dough into prepared pan, smoothing into an even layer with an offset spatula. (You can slightly wet your hands to press dough into place before smoothing. Dough will be quite thick and stiff.)

4. Bake until center is nearly set, 31 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven, and immediately press down edges using a heat-safe spatula. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.

5. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut in half, creating 2 (9x4½-inch)

rectangles. Cut each half into 5 triangles with 3-inch bases

6. Place Coffee Ganache Frosting in a piping bag fitted with a petal tip (Wilton No. 104). Pointing narrow end of tip away from your body and toward top of cookie bar "tree," pipe rounded zigzags, creating swags down tree. Garnish with sugar pearls and dragées, if desired. Cookie bars are best served within 2 days of baking. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PRO TIP

Baking the bars until nearly set in the center and pressing down the edges once cooked will help keep the centers from sinking for a more even "tree." Decrease the cook time by a few minutes for a gooey, chewy center.

COFFEE GANACHE FROSTING

Makes about ¾ cup

- ¾ cup (180 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) coffee beans, crushed**
- 4 ounces (115 grams) 60% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**

1. In a small saucepan, heat cream over medium-high heat just until it begins to simmer. Stir in crushed coffee beans. Remove from heat; let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for at least 8 hours or overnight.

2. Strain cream through a fine-mesh sieve, discarding coffee beans.

3. Place chocolate in a heatproof bowl.

4. Measure out ½ cup (120 grams) coffee-infused cream. In a small saucepan, bring cream just to a simmer over medium-high heat. Pour hot cream over chocolate. Let stand for 30 seconds to 1 minute; whisk until smooth. Let cool to room temperature, at least 1 hour. (Alternatively, refrigerate for about 30 minutes, stirring every 5 to 10 minutes.)

5. Whisk ganache by hand until it thickens and slightly lightens in color, 2 to 3 minutes. (Alternatively, transfer ganache to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, and beat for 30 seconds to 1 minute.) (Do not overmix.) Use immediately.

PRO TIP

If the ganache sets before decorating, gently reheat over a double boiler, and whisk until thick and spreadable.

CRANBERRY MERINGUE BARS

Makes 12 bars

Recipe by Michele Song

Are you looking for a new showstopper to add to your holiday tradition? These festive and vibrant cranberry-orange meringue bars are guaranteed to impress your family and friends. The tart, luscious cranberry curd filling pairs perfectly with the sweet, toasty notes of the Brown Sugar Meringue and the spiced speculoos cookie crust.

- 1½ cups (145 grams) speculoos cookies**
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted**
- 1 cup (200 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided**
- 12 ounces (340 grams) fresh or thawed frozen cranberries**
- ¼ cup (60 grams) water**
- 1 large orange (131 grams)**
- 3 tablespoons (24 grams) cornstarch**
- 4 large eggs (200 grams)**
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams)**
- ¾ cup (180 grams) fresh orange juice**
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter**
- Brown Sugar Meringue (recipe follows)**

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse speculoos cookies until finely ground. Add melted butter, 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar, and ½ teaspoon salt; pulse until incorporated and mixture sticks together when rubbed between fingertips. Press mixture into bottom of prepared pan.
3. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F (170°C).
4. In a medium saucepan, bring cranberries and ¼ cup (60 grams) water to a gentle simmer over medium heat; cook until cranberries start to burst, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool slightly. Transfer cranberries to the container of a blender, and purée until smooth. Strain mixture, discarding skins. Set aside.
5. In a small bowl, place remaining 1 cup (200 grams) sugar. Zest orange over sugar, and rub together with fingertips to help release oils in zest. Add cornstarch, and stir until evenly dispersed.
6. In a metal or glass bowl, whisk

together eggs and egg yolks. Whisking constantly, gradually add zest-sugar mixture until combined.

7. In a large saucepan, bring puréed cranberries, orange juice, butter, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt to a gentle simmer over medium-high heat, whisking occasionally. Remove from heat; gradually pour half of hot cranberry mixture into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Add egg mixture to remaining hot cranberry mixture in pan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Simmer for 2 minutes to ensure cornstarch is cooked through. Strain cranberry curd through a fine-mesh sieve. Pour mixture onto prepared crust.

8. Bake until curd is set and slightly jiggly, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool to room temperature, about 1 hour. Refrigerate until set, at least 4 hours or overnight.

9. Top with Brown Sugar Meringue, and make peaks using a rubber spatula. Using a kitchen torch, toast meringue until top is golden brown. Best served same day or when cold; refrigerate any leftovers in an airtight container. (To make ahead, make the cranberry bars, and refrigerate overnight; make the Brown Sugar Meringue when ready to serve.)

BROWN SUGAR MERINGUE

Makes about 4 cups

- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup (60 grams) water**
- 4 large egg whites (120 grams), room temperature**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) cream of tartar**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**

1. In a medium saucepan, combine sugars and ¼ cup (60 grams) water. Using your index finger, gently stir sugars and water together until sugar is wet and resembles wet sand. Wipe any excess sugar from sides of pan using wet hands. (This will prevent the sugar from crystallizing.) Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat; cook until an instant-read thermometer registers 240°F (116°C), 5 to 7 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites and cream of tartar at medium speed until soft peaks form, 1 to 2 minutes. With mixer running, slowly pour hot sugar syrup into egg whites. Increase

mixer speed to high, and beat until shiny, smooth, stiff peaks form. Add vanilla, and beat to incorporate. Use immediately.

PEPPERMINT CHEESECAKE SWIRL BROWNIES

Makes 16 brownies

Recipe by Mike Johnson

While I love all the flavors of the holidays, my absolute favorite is peppermint. Add a little chocolate to that, and it's heaven. These rich, fudgy brownies with two layers of peppermint cheesecake filling swirled throughout are the absolute perfect treat for the holidays!

- 8 ounces (225 grams) cream cheese, softened**
- 1½ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar, divided**
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature and divided**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract**
- 20 drops red gel food coloring (optional)**
- 4 ounces (115 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter**
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar**
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- ½ cup (63 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup (21 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder**

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth and creamy, about 2 minutes. Add ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar, and beat at medium speed for 2 to 3 minutes. Add 1 egg (50 grams) and peppermint extract, and beat until smooth and well combined. Add food coloring (if using). Transfer cheesecake batter to a large bowl; set aside.

2. Place chopped chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl.

3. In a small saucepan, heat butter over medium heat; cook, stirring frequently, just until butter comes to a vigorous simmer. Immediately pour hot butter over chocolate. Let stand for 2 minutes; whisk until smooth.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

5. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat brown sugar, vanilla, salt, remaining 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, and remaining 3 eggs (150 grams) at high speed for exactly 10 minutes. (It will look like a very thick batter.) With mixer running, pour in slightly

cooled chocolate mixture, and beat at medium speed until smooth.

6. Butter an 8-inch square baking pan. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan; butter parchment.

7. In a small bowl, sift together flour and cocoa. Using a spatula, gently fold flour mixture into chocolate mixture just until combined. Pour half of brownie batter in prepared pan, smoothing top with a spatula. Top with half of cheesecake batter. Repeat layers once. Using a small spatula or butter knife, gently swirl batters together to create a marbled effect.

8. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool completely in pan. (The center of the brownies will seem slightly underbaked, but the brownies will continue to cook and set as they cool.) Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut into 16 brownies.

CITRUS SUGAR COOKIE BARS

Makes 24 bars

Recipe by Laura Kasavan

Soft and buttery Citrus Sugar Cookie Bars are a dream for citrus lovers. Zesty and bright, you'll love the versatility of these bars (use any mix of citrus you love). Generous swirls of Citrus Vanilla Frosting make the perfect finish

1½ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
3 tablespoons (9 grams) citrus zest*
1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 large egg (50 grams)
2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon (8 grams) cornstarch
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
Citrus Vanilla Frosting (recipe follows)
Garnish: holiday sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse together sugar and zest until zest is finely ground, about 1 minute.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat citrus sugar and butter at medium speed until fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until a

soft dough forms. Turn out dough into prepared pan. Using a sheet of parchment paper coated with cooking spray, press dough into pan.

5. Bake until lightly golden and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 20 to 24 minutes. Let cool completely in pan.
6. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. Using an offset spatula, swirl Citrus Vanilla Frosting onto bars. Garnish with holiday sprinkles, if desired. Refrigerate until set, about 20 minutes. Cut into 24 bars. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

**I used the zest of 1 orange, 2 Meyer lemons, and 2 limes, but any combination or singular type of citrus will work.*

CITRUS VANILLA FROSTING

Makes about 2 cups

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¼ cup (60 grams) crème fraîche
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon (3 grams) citrus zest*
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
½ tablespoon (7.5 grams) citrus juice*

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, crème fraîche, and salt at medium speed until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in zest and vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until incorporated. Add citrus juice, and beat at medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 1 to 2 minutes. Use immediately.

**I used a blend of orange, Meyer lemon, and lime for the citrus zest and juice*

CINNAMON ROLL BLONDIES WITH CREAM CHEESE GLAZE

Makes 12 to 15 blondies

Recipe by Elisabeth Farris

These Cinnamon Roll Blondies are everything you love about a classic cinnamon roll in one delicious, chewy bar.

1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled
½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams)
1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder

½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Cinnamon Filling (recipe follows)

Cream Cheese Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat brown sugar, melted butter, and granulated sugar at medium-high speed for 1 to 2 minutes until mixture is light in color and fluffy. Add eggs and vanilla, beating until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. Gently fold flour mixture into sugar mixture until combined. Spread batter into prepared pan, smoothing top. (Batter will be thick.) Spoon dollops of Cinnamon Filling onto batter, and swirl using a knife. (The filling will be thick and slightly grainy, but it will still bake beautifully.)
4. Bake until lightly golden on top, 22 to 27 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. (The center will still be a little gooey, but they will continue to bake even after you take them out of the oven. Do not overbake, or they will become dry.) Let cool completely.
5. Using a piping bag or spoon, drizzle Cream Cheese Glaze onto cooled blondies. Cut into bars, and store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

CINNAMON FILLING

Makes about ½ cup

½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon

1. In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients. Use immediately.

CREAM CHEESE GLAZE

Makes about ½ cup

1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon (14 grams) cream cheese, softened
1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon (20 grams) milk

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Add more confectioners' sugar if glaze becomes too runny, and add more milk if it becomes too thick. Use immediately.



Cookie Swap

CRASH COURSE

GATHERING YOUR NEAREST AND DEAREST FOR A COOKIE SWAP IS ONE OF THE SWEETEST WAYS TO SPREAD THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT. FROM PREPPING AHEAD TO PACKAGING, HERE'S HOW TO HOST THE JOLLIEST COOKIE SWAP OF ALL.

Avoid the holiday rush. Host your swap in early December before your guests get too busy baking for and attending other holiday parties. Make it a casual weeknight get-together or a weekend brunch so your swap doesn't conflict with other holiday events.

Do the math. When deciding how many cookies to ask each guest to bring, err on the side of having more cookies than needed rather than risking not having enough. This will ensure there's a large variety of cookies for everyone to sample from as well as to take home. Once you've chosen the number of batches each guest should bring, plan on baking just as many batches of your own recipe for the swap.

Send invitations a month ahead. Invite your guests well in advance so everyone can plan their recipe ahead of time. This will reduce stress and last-minute baking during such a busy season. In your invitations, specify when guests should RSVP by and when to submit their recipe and offer up some inspiration by sharing your favorite cookie bakers and cookie cookbooks for them to reference for sweet ideas.

Help coordinate recipes. Because a cookie swap with five different kinds of chocolate thumbprint cookies won't be much fun, make sure there aren't duplicate recipes before the swap. Ask guests with crossovers to pick another recipe featuring a flavor or type of cookie that may be missing from the lineup.



Provide extra bites and beverages. Even though your party is all about the sweets, your guests will want to balance out the cookie sampling with some tasty finger foods and savory appetizers as well as drinks like coffee, hot chocolate, or a holiday punch.

Deck the halls. Add visual interest to the cookie display table by layering serving ware of different heights, like holiday-themed plates, decorative trays, cake stands, and even three-tier trays. If you run out of serving ware, turn your baking pans into holiday-ready cookie boxes by lining them with festive tissue paper (the kind you'd use for gifts) and wrapping ribbon around them.

Showcase each cookie with recipe cards and printouts of the recipes. Let everyone know what's available by making recipe cards that list the name of each recipe and the baker who made it. Remember to include printouts of the recipes so guests can recreate the cookie magic at home.

Make your party extra merry by playing cookie-themed games. When guests arrive, give them a necklace of ribbon and three candy canes, and instruct them not to say "cookie" during the party. If they do, the person they were

speaking to can take a candy cane from their necklace and place it on their own. Whoever has the most candy canes by the end of the party wins a prize. You can also organize a taste test by having each guest guess a secret ingredient in each cookie. The person with the most correct guesses per recipe wins a prize.

Set up a packaging station to make take-home cookie boxes.

Supply your packaging table with containers like simple cardboard boxes, cellophane bags, and holiday-themed paper plates. Provide linings like festive tissue paper and parchment paper so your guests' cookies stay intact during transportation. Finally, be sure to have details like twine, ribbon, tape, scissors, and stickers available so people can seal their cookie boxes and personalize them with yuletide flair.





COUNTDOWN TO YOUR *Cookie Swap*

GET ORGANIZED AND PREP AHEAD FOR YOUR
SWAP WITH OUR FOUR-WEEK TIMELINE

4 WEEKS BEFORE

Send out invitations.

3 WEEKS BEFORE

- Make sure you have two large tables, one for the display table and one for the packaging station.
- Shop for packaging station supplies.

2 WEEKS BEFORE

- Collect RSVPs and guests' recipes
- Check for duplicates and ask guests to adjust if necessary.
- Decide on your own cookie swap recipe.
- Plan a menu of snacks and beverages to serve alongside cookies.

OUR PARTY FAVOR PICK

Because a good host never lets their guests leave without a thoughtful party favor, purchase a small ornament for everyone who attends. Place the ornaments near the packaging station so guests can decorate their cookie boxes with them and take them home to use in their own holiday decorations.



1 WEEK BEFORE

- Gather your serving ware for the display table.
- Shop for ingredients for your cookie recipe and other food you will serve.
- Make a playlist of holiday songs to play during the swap.

2 DAYS BEFORE

- Make cookie dough and store in refrigerator if recipe allows.

1 DAY BEFORE

- Set up and decorate your tables.
- Print guests' recipes and recipe cards.
- Prep snacks and beverage stations.
- Bake off cookies and decorate them.
- Organize props needed for cookie games.

DAY OF

- Set out your cookies, greet your guests, and reap the benefits of all your planning ahead! 🍪

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on the cover

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY
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DICKEY
FOOD STYLING BY ELIZABETH
STRINGER
STYLING BY CAROLINE BLUM

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Book!
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bake

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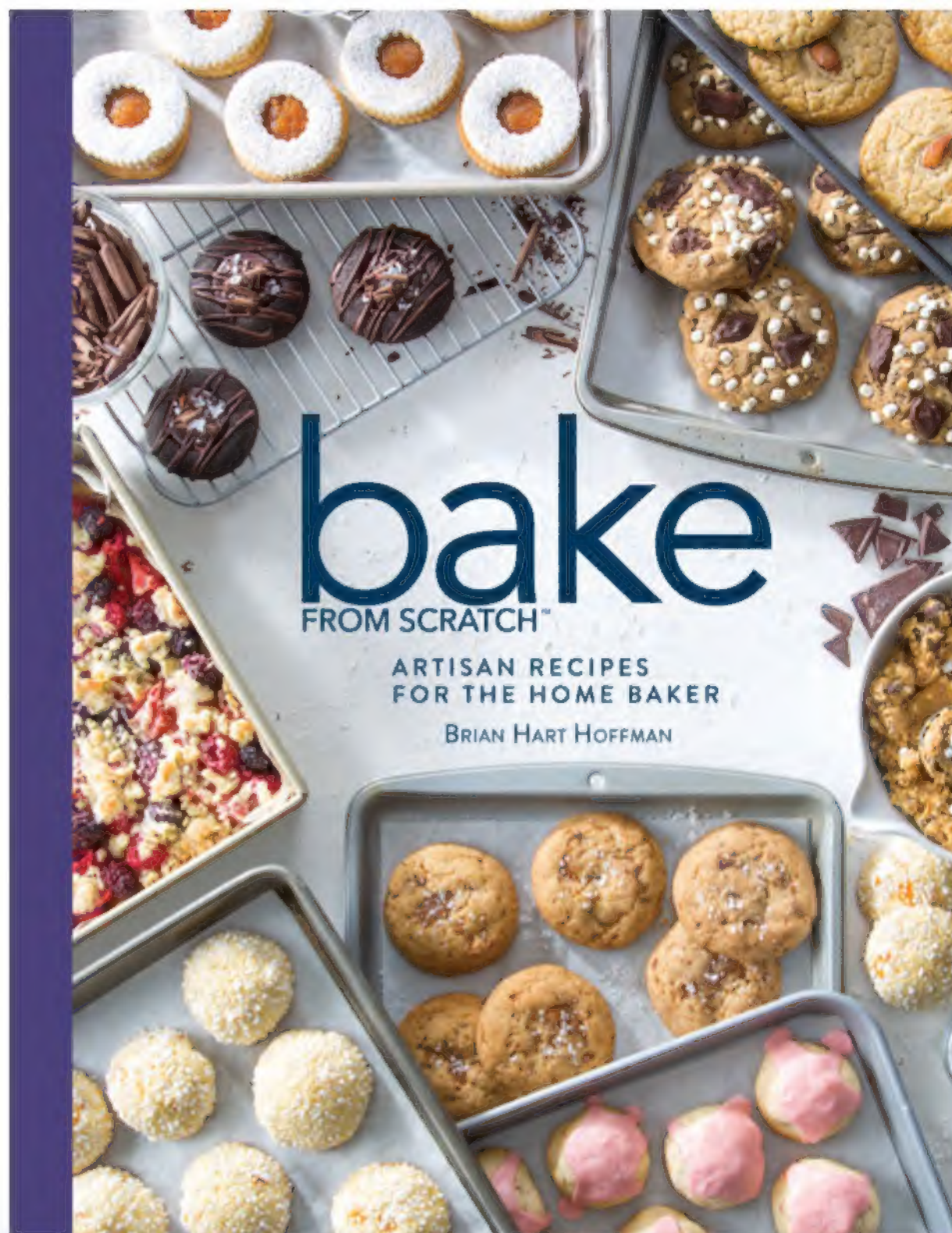
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